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THE
QUARTERLY REVIEW.

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THE
QUARTERLY REVIEW.

ART. I.—*An Essay on Probabilities, and on their Application to Life Contingencies and Insurance Offices.* By Augustus de Morgan, of Trinity College, Cambridge. London, 12mo. 1838.

MR. DE MORGAN—known favourably in the scientific world as Professor of Mathematics in University College, London, and Secretary of the Royal Astronomical Society—is, we believe; connected as Actuary, or otherwise, with one of those numerous Insurance-offices, of which he treats generally in the volume before us. It is chiefly employed, however, in elucidating the doctrine of what mortal men call *Chances*—a subject of great intricacy, which, towards the latter end of the seventeenth century, first engaged the attention of Huygens, Pascal, Bernoulli, and some others; and which was shortly afterwards taken up by De Moivre—several of whose brilliant results, as Mr. de Morgan observes, were left to us without the knowledge of the steps which led to them, and the *tables of mortality* constructed by whom were for a long time almost exclusively adopted. Our Professor treats at some length of the nature of Direct and Inverse Probabilities, of various Tables and their use, adaptation of Probabilities to Life Contingencies, Annuities, value of Reversions, &c., giving the solution of numerous problems, rules, and examples to elucidate their application. He also undertakes to expound the chances of dice-throwing and card-playing; but we have no desire to meddle with this part of his subject, even though the tendency of the study should be ‘to convert games of chance into something more resembling games of skill,’ being persuaded that skill among gamblers is a dangerous weapon. Of the Professor’s thirteen chapters, three only are appropriated to Life Insurance, and the practice and management of Insurance-offices: from these we shall occasionally quote, and to them alone confine the few observations we have to offer on this clever but unequal volume.

Mr. de Morgan is friendly, as every humane person must be, to these institutions, through the means of which a certain provision can be made, on moderate terms, for the fatherless and

widows; but he goes beyond this, and appears to think that the *theory of Insurance and Annuities* might be greatly extended, even 'to an agreement of a community to consider the goods of its individual members as common.' Such projects have been put forth from time to time, but hitherto they have been generally considered as the visionary product of fantastic heads. He shall, however, speak for himself:—

'The theory of insurance, with its kindred science of annuities, deserves the attention of the academical bodies. Stripped of its technical terms and its commercial associations, it may be presented in a point of view which will give it strong moral claims to notice. Though based upon self-interest, yet it is the most enlightened and benevolent form which the projects of self-interest ever took. It is, in fact, in a limited sense, and a practicable method, the agreement of a community to consider the goods of its individual members as common. It is an agreement that those whose fortune it shall be to have more than average success shall resign the overplus in favour of those who have less. And though, as yet, it has only been applied to the reparations of the evils arising from storm, fire, premature death, disease, and old age, yet there is no placing a limit to the extensions which its application might receive, if the public were fully aware of its principles, and of the safety with which they may be put in practice.'—Preface, p. xv

Not a few sensible people are of opinion that, as regards 'the reparation of evils,' such as cases of fire and premature death, both the theory and the practice of insurance have already been carried quite far enough. We confess we are inclined to be of this way of thinking, and can only hope that the many knots of projectors who have been so ready, of late years, to exhibit in this 'most enlightened and benevolent form which the projects of self-interest ever took,' may be able to hold their ground. Professor de Morgan, however, appears to entertain a more favourable opinion than we are disposed to adopt. He says,—

'The expenses of carrying on an assurance office, though they vary somewhat with the amount of business, yet do not by any means increase as fast. In the first year of its existence it would not be surprising if all the premiums paid were swallowed up by house-rent, salaries, &c.; while, in process of time, increase of business might reduce such expenditure to 2 per cent. upon the yearly premiums. Some capital, therefore, is necessary at the commencement; for, if there be none, those who first insure their lives are entirely dependent upon the future success of the office. But this capital need not be large: in the present state of things, an engaged capital of one hundred thousand pounds is certainly above the mark, even for an office which is entirely without connexion, and starts without one single life insured. If, as very often happens, a tolerably large number of customers has been obtained before the prospectus of the office is announced, then a capital, the interest of which will cover the expenses of management, is sufficient. But

But here it must be observed that the proprietors of this capital run some risk of losing a portion of their principal, and a still greater one of losing the interest for a limited time. This risk is the greater the smaller the original subscription, and it must be paid for accordingly. At the same time it must be remembered that the mere existence of the capital diminishes the risk, by making it the interest of every proprietor to procure business for the office. The connexion thus created is the secret of the successful start which has frequently been made; and it may be considered as very unlikely that an office will fail, from want of business, which is so well supported in the first instance as is implied when a capital of the preceding amount is announced.'—p. 264.

An *engaged* capital of one hundred thousand pounds sounds well; but if such ever existed, and 5 per cent. be allowed to those who subscribe it, it contributes only to its own destruction, and to swell the debt of the incipient undertaking;—but we shall enter a little more into detail concerning the nature and progress of these institutions. The subject is not new to us. Twelve years ago (*Quarterly Rev.* No. 69), we took a comprehensive view of the several Life Assurance Offices then existing: pointing out the great benefits they had conferred on families of almost every class, especially of those who had only a life-interest in their incomes—but, at the same time, not concealing their defects, nor passing over certain abuses to which they are liable. The insurance companies which we then referred to amounted to thirty-two, but we believe not less than forty were in being at the time. They have since, however, increased to a most extraordinary extent; and that, we believe, with very doubtful advantage, either to themselves or the community. 'In 1806,'—thus advertises in 1839 the secretary of the Provident Life Office,—'there were only *eight* life offices in London, including the Provident. Since then their number has increased to nearly *one hundred*: of these, about *thirty* have broken up, and *seventy-two* is their number in the London Directory for the present year.'

We have no wish to inquire into the secret histories of these *thirty up-breaks*, few of which could have occurred without serious loss and inconvenience to others besides the shareholders. Before many of them started there were offices enough, well established, and quite adequate to supply the wants of the public; and in the race against these old favourites some may have found it impossible to get on, even though the managers might be honest and able men, who neither applied funds improperly, nor entered into indiscreet engagements. At all events no warning has been taken by their downfall. Even since this year began we suspect a new office has figured for every month that has elapsed. The start, in fact, is easy. A busy, bustling attorney, with some half-dozen or

a dozen others, who call themselves directors, with a secretary or actuary, and a medical gentleman, draw up a prospectus in which higher benefits, and lower terms, are held out than in any previously existing office, and every possible accommodation offered to all such as may be induced to deal with this tempting novelty. Very little money is required to set the machine a-going. A nominal capital of 500,000*l.* or 1,000,000*l.* (seldom less than the former) heads the prospectus: but the only present demand, on a subscription share, is some 2*l.*, 3*l.*, or 5*l.*; and, to induce friends and others to *take shares*, an immediate interest of 4*l.* or 5*l.* per cent. is promised on the subscribed capital, though the said capital itself, invested in government securities, can be producing little more than 3 per cent. Here, then, amidst so many flattering superficialities, is at once a direct and continuous reduction of the subscribed capital. Then the directors, the secretary, and actuary, the doctor, and a clerk or two, must be paid salaries; a house must be hired and fitted up; and every one must know that no trifling quantity of this kind of business, of slow growth in new, and gradual even in old offices, will be found sufficient for meeting all these contingencies and permanent expenses. Moreover, the old offices are, or at least profess to be, careful to take only such applicants as are in a sound state of health; but many of the new ones do not hesitate to invite, openly, persons of a far different description. 'I should be very sorry,' says the late actuary of the *Equitable*, 'to see this society descend to the quackery of pretending to determine how many years should be added to the age of a person, according as he is afflicted with asthma, dropsy, palsy, &c., in order to fix the premium at which his life is to be insured.' It is at least obvious that to conduct an office on the principle which this gentleman pronounces 'quackery,' must require very great additional delicacy of calculation, and occasion, therefore, a large increase in the expence of management.

It has been not an uncommon practice (adopted by some that do not require it) to blazon at the head of their advertisements long lists of noble patrons, honorary presidents, and trustees—(lords, dukes, princes of the blood—even the Queen has not escaped)—patrons who can afford them no patronage—trustees who have no trust—presidents who never preside—in short an array of grand names that are mere decoy-ducks. One of the newest offices, we perceive, has no less than four English and four Scotch peers for its *supporters*! The author just quoted, in repudiating practices which were adopted by the *Equitable* at its first establishment, and afterwards abandoned—such as raising their 25th policy at once to No. 275—says,

'Another

'Another expedient, equally dishonourable, was adopted for the like purpose of adding to the importance of the Society, by holding forth, with their permission, the names of Lord Willoughby de Parham and others as Directors, who had not the least interest or concern in its affairs; and at the end of two years, when, it is probable, deceit was deemed no longer necessary, thanks were absolutely voted to Lord Willoughby for the use of his name in sustaining the reputation of the Society. . . . No aid derived from a corrupt source can be regarded as honourable, nor is it easy to say which are the most reprehensible—the gentlemen that lend their names, or the Society that makes use of them, for the purpose of misleading the public.'—*Rise and Progress of the Equitable Society.*

If the noble personages now alluded to have, out of pure, but mistaken, good nature, been prevailed on to lend the use of their names, we agree with this writer in condemning the practice as a source of corruption: if they have *taken shares* in the several concerns, they are no doubt aware that they are responsible, not merely for the amount actually subscribed, but for their full share of the nominal advertised capital; and it is by no means legally certain that, without holding shares, the lending of their names does not incur the same degree of responsibility. If there be any among them who have not sanctioned the use of their names, we would recommend them to follow the recent example of the Duke of Wellington.

Some eight or nine months ago there appeared in the newspapers the report of the case brought before the Insolvent Debtors' Court of a clerk to a company called 'The London Equitable,' who stated that he had come from the country in consequence of an advertisement in the papers. On repairing to the office, he said, he was told that on depositing 100*l.* he should forthwith have the appointment of Secretary, and speedily be promoted to the rank of Director. He soon discovered, however, that all the names in the list of Directors, with the exception of two, were fictitious,—not merely men of straw, but a collection of assumed names, whose owners had no existence.* He stated that the capital of this Company was advertised to be 500,000*l.*, in 50,000 shares of 10*l.* each, and that a deposit of 2*l.* a share was required to be paid down. The Duke of Wellington was the declared *patron*, the Bank of England were the *cashiers*, and a long array of imposing names graced the prospectus. The Duke, however, as usual, 'hit the nail on the head'—he applied at once to a police magistrate, requesting that an inquiry might be made into the nature of the affair. The result was, that this bubble Company immediately exploded—the poor Secretary, lost his 100*l.*

100*l.* and got into debt—and the two worthies who projected the fraud were discovered to have disappeared with whatever other moneys might have been advanced by their dupes. This we are afraid is by no means a solitary case, for John Bull, with all his mother-wit, has at all times been the ready dupe of adventurers, projectors, and speculators. It is matter of history that, about the period of the South Sea concern, more than 200 visionary projects for accumulating wealth were formed, all of which shared the fate of the grand bubble, burst, and ‘dissolved into thin air.’*

Many of the new Insurance Companies, in order to attract customers, have reduced the rates of their premiums below what the probabilities of human life, deduced from long and varied experience and observation, will warrant. There is one office in King-William Street, ‘The Standard of England,’ which advertises ‘lower rates of premium than those of any other office: hence’ (says the advertisement) ‘an immediate and certain bonus is given to the assured, instead of the remote and contingent advantage offered by some Companies, of a participation in their profits.’ We demur to this ‘hence’—and maintain that ‘lower rates’ are incompatible with ‘an immediate and certain bonus.’ This office, in fact, has been little more than two years in existence, so that its ‘lower rates’ could at best be considered only in the light of an experiment;—but its rates do *not* appear to be ‘lower than those of any other office.’ The *Independent and West Middlesex Assurance Company*, of the same standing with the former, advertise terms still lower! Thus:—

	Age	30	40	50
Standard	1	19 7	2 13 3	3 18 8
West Middlesex . .	1	15 0	2 10 0	3 5 0

We should say that, without extraordinary good management, an extensive and healthy body of the assured, and the exercise of most rigid economy, these rates of premium, in both cases, are too low to be safe. But the latter office offers so extraordinary a display of private liberality for ‘immediate public benefits,’ that we are tempted to place on our page its oft-repeated and almost daily notice in the newspapers, precisely in its own shape, words, and figures.

* Of all the schemes of that era, *four* only have survived, and these still exist in full vigour, because founded on good sense and honest principles—the Royal Exchange Assurance Company, the London Assurance Company, the York Building Company, and the English Copper Company.

On Life Insurance.

‘IMMEDIATE BENEFITS OFFERED TO THE PUBLIC. LIFE ANNUITY RATES, calculated on Equitable Principles!!!

FOR EXAMPLE.

For every 100*l.* deposited, this Association will grant the Annuity placed opposite the Age of the party depositing.—From 50*l.* and upwards, in proportion.

Age.									
30 to	40 to	45 to	50 to	55 to	60 to	65 to	70 to	75 to	80
£ s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
8 0 0	8 10 0	9 0 0	9 10 0	10 10 0	12 10 0	15 10 0	20 0 0	25 0 0	
Pr. Ct.	Pr. Ct.	Pr. Ct.	Pr. Ct.	Pr. Ct.	Pr. Ct.	Pr. Ct.	Pr. Ct.	Pr. Ct.	Pr. Ct.

LIFE AND FIRE INSURANCE RATES Reduced 30 per Cent. per Annum.

LIFE ASSURANCE RATES.

Age	20 to	25 to	30 to	35	35	38 to	45 to	50
Premium..	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
	1 11 0	1 15 0	2 0 0	2 6 0	2 10 0	2 15 0	3 5 0	0

This Company make no Charges for intermediate Ages under 50 Years.

FIRE INSURANCE RATES.

	Common Insurance.	s. d.
Private Houses and Shops (not hazardous)		1 0 per Cent.
Hazardous		2 0
Double Hazardous		3 6
Farming Stock		1 6

INDEPENDENT AND WEST MIDDLESEX ASSURANCE COMPANY,

Opposite the Bazaar, Baker-street, Portman-square, London; St. David's-street,
Edinburgh; Ingram-street, Glasgow; and Sackville-street, Dublin.

Established and empowered under the several Acts of Parliament of 14th Geo.
3rd, c. 48;—22nd Geo. 3rd,—53rd Geo. 3rd, c. 141, and 3rd Geo. 4, c. 92;
1st Vic. c. 10.

Capital, ONE MILLION.

(By order of the Board.)

Resident Secretary, Mr. WILLIAM HOLF.

Bankers—{ The Bank of England.
Bank of Ireland.
Western Bank of Scotland.'

Bravo! we know nothing equal to this. Take just one example, from the terms of this advertisement, to give an idea of the liberality of the ‘Independent and West Middlesex.’ A person from thirty to forty years of age, say thirty-four, deposits 100*l.*, for which he is to receive an annuity of 8*l.* per annum. He insures his life for 100*l.* at a premium of 2*l.* per cent. per annum, and receives therefore a clear annuity of 6*l.* per cent. in money. Allow the office to make 4*l.* interest on the 100*l.* deposited, (which is more than any of the government securities will give,) and consequently the company, by paying 8*l.* and receiving 6*l.*, makes an annual sacrifice of 2*l.* per cent. during

during the life of the annuitant, without the possibility, as appears to us, of redeeming the loss, for on his death the 100*l.* deposited must be repaid to the representatives, being the sum assured. What mystery there may be in this transaction it is impossible for us to unriddle. But we may observe that the liberal annuity tables of government, for the age of thirty-four, when the price of consols is 93, give an annuity for 100*l.* stock of 5*l.* 3*s.* 7*d.*, or, which is the same thing, for 100*l.* sterling, 5*l.* 11*s.* 4*d.*, making thus, by this office, a further 'sacrifice to public benefit' of 2*l.* 8*s.* 8*d.* per cent. Can this deceive any one with comprehension beyond that of an idiot? Can any one be simple enough to imagine that James Drummond and James Alexander, of Charing Cross and Carlton House Gardens, (names which figure in the list of its Directors,) are to be found in Baker Street, opposite the Bazaar?

This Independent Company, established opposite the Bazaar in Baker Street, affords almost a solitary instance of an office of this kind being removed to a great distance from any other; for it is a curious feature, in the localities of these institutions, to find the new offices always endeavouring to cluster round the old ones. Thus, in New Bridge Street and Chatham Place, we find no less than fifteen brisk rivals elbowing the ancient fixtures of the Rock and the Equitable. In the new street in the City, bearing the name of King William, new Insurance Companies have sprung up like mushrooms, some of them perhaps not much better rooted than this species of fungus. It has been said that this noble street, with its splendid-fronted houses, consists chiefly of gin palaces and insurance offices, twelve or thirteen of the latter squeezing round the two old-established companies, the London Life and Edinburgh. Again, in Waterloo Place and Regent Street, we find six or seven close to the Asylum and Palladium.

There is a reason for this: the new ones, as we have observed, being comparatively unscrupulous in their reception of subjects, and outbidding each other in the diminution of premiums, follow up their scheme by being ready on the spot to entertain the applications of those *rejected* by the senior establishments. A person applies at some old office for an insurance on his life; the doctor finds him plethoric, asthmatic, consumptive, or dropsical; he tells him his life is 'not considered to be insurable: the disappointed stranger (or his agent) asks what he is to do, it being of the greatest importance he should effect an assurance. The answer probably is, 'Knock at the next door, where they are not quite so nice as we are.' Another finds the premium of the old office too high, and is unwilling to give it: he is recommended to the next door but one. The only chances,
in

in fact, that most of the new offices have for obtaining business, lie in outbidding one another in the reduction of the premiums, and in receiving persons with bodily infirmities, or such as may be going to unhealthy climates; but they depend mostly on the reduction of the premiums. Now we contend that it is a fallacy to suppose that the reduction of a few shillings per cent. in the premium can be of any advantage to the insured, more especially where there is a participation of profits, while it operates as a serious drawback on the profits of the office, and consequently of the insured also. The higher the premium, and the stricter the caution in taking none but good lives, the larger will be the profits to be divided. It was by these means that the Equitable was enabled to amass its eleven or twelve millions, and to divide such an enormous share of profits among the insured. The Northampton Tables were generally its guide, and those insuring were not only required to produce testimonials of sound health, but in most cases to appear personally before a board of directors; and the consequence was, as the late Actuary tells us, that from the Equitable experience it was found that, where three persons were expected to die, two only actually died.

Mr. de Morgan observes that, with a merchant or a banker, the liability to a demand and the demand itself come so nearly upon one another, that real insolvency and bankruptcy are seldom far asunder.

‘When credit cannot be sustained by monthly, and even daily, proofs of substance, it takes its departure altogether: but it is not necessarily so with an insurance office, of whose existence it is the essence to be always receiving consideration for bills which, one with another, have a long time to run. Such an establishment may be in reality *insolvent* many years before the symptoms of *bankruptcy* come on. As no large concern of the kind has hitherto failed, it is difficult to say how they would finally come on: but this much is certain, that an insurance office which could really pay only ten shillings in the pound might, by introducing a better system, or by mere force of circumstances, not only recover its ground, but ultimately become exceedingly profitable. But I throw this part of the argument (though it shows a strong principle of vitality inherent in the constitution of such offices) out of the question: for, surely, no sane and honest person would trifle with important matters so far as to assert that the possibility of temporary insolvency, to be redeemed by the chapter of accidents or prudence, when it was wanted, should enter into the deliberate calculations on which men should be invited to stake the subsistence of their children.’—p. 252.

We entirely agree with Mr. de Morgan that no sane or honest person would trifle with such matters as this—but we must dissent from his opinion as to the easy recovery of an office that could only pay ten shillings in the pound. ❀

Taking

Taking into consideration the vast importance of the subject to thousands and tens of thousands of families, no man could, perhaps, serve society more essentially than by affording the public at large some distinct data for making a prudential choice among so many rival Insurance Offices: but the attempt would be extremely invidious; and we are sensible, moreover, that we could not, if we would, do the thing completely and satisfactorily. Perhaps the safest general rule is, to look well at the list of directors. If these are men of known integrity, of aptitude for business, moving in some public sphere, and of substantial property, one may feel himself on pretty safe ground: such men are not likely to lend their names to any visionary undertaking, nor to require any ostentatious array of noble lords, honourables, or right honourables, to bolster up the institution which they direct. We may be permitted, however, to classify the several offices into their septennial periods of existence, as affording some aid towards the guidance of persons intending to assure their lives. The letter *x* precedes the Mutual Assurance Companies, *y* the Proprietary Assurance Companies, and *z* the mixed Mutual and Proprietary.

First period.

From one year to seven.

Experimental.

Of the twenty offices included in this class, it will be seen there are three under two years old, four under one, and six not three years in existence.

<i>z</i>	Argus, established in . . .	1834
<i>z</i>	Britannia	1837
<i>y</i>	British Colonial . . .	1838
<i>y</i>	Family Endowment . .	1835
<i>y</i>	Freemasons and General	1838
<i>x</i>	Hand-in-Hand	1836
<i>y</i>	Independent	1836
<i>y</i>	Legal and General . .	1836
<i>x</i>	Metropolitan	1835
<i>y</i>	Minerva	1836
<i>x</i>	Mutual Life	1834
<i>z</i>	National Endowment .	1838
<i>y</i>	National Loan Fund, &c.	1837
<i>y</i>	Protector	1836
<i>z</i>	Standard of England .	1836
<i>y</i>	United Kingdom . . .	1834
<i>y</i>	Universal	1834
<i>y</i>	Victoria	1838
<i>z</i>	Westminster and General	1837
<i>y</i>	York and London . . .	1834

Second Period.

From seven years to fourteen.

Probationary.

It may be remarked, that while twenty new offices were created in the last five years, these four offices only sprung up in the nine years preceding. *

<i>y</i>	Crown	1825
<i>y</i>	National	1830
<i>z</i>	Promoter	1826
<i>y</i>	University	1825

Third

Third Period.

From fourteen years to twenty-one..

Generally in a salutary state.

x	Alliance	1814
z	Asylum	1824
y	British Commercial	1820
y	Clerical, Medical, &c.	1824
y	Economic	1823
z	Glasgow	1823
	European	1819
y	Guardian	1821
y	Imperial	1820
	Law Life	1823
	Palladium	1824
	Scottish Union	1824
z	Albion	1805
x	Amicable	1706
y	Atlas	1808
y	Caledonian	1805
y	Eagle	1807
x	Equitable	1762
z	Globe	1803
y	Hope	1807
x	London Life Association	1806
y	Licensed Victuallers	1721
z	London	1721
y	North British	1809
z	Pelican	1797
	Provident	1806
	Rock	1806
	Royal Exchange	1720
x	Scottish Widows' Fund	1815
	Union	1714
y	West of England	1807
y	Westminster Society	1792

These lists are deficient by some fifteen or sixteen, (the new ones of this year not included,) but the information they afford may be found useful in the way of caution. At the same time, we desire to be understood as not doubting that, in the first list, consisting of twenty offices, in which the oldest has been only five years in existence, there may be some so well conducted,—under respectable managers of known integrity and character,—as to invite a constant stream of business, notwithstanding their minority; while there may also be some few in the older classes, not of that high public estimation as to induce those who have looked narrowly into the nature and conduct of Assurance Companies to intrust them with their own interests, or recommend them to their friends.

If the question were to be decided by numbers—(the second class y, containing thirty-five companies out of the fifty-six named; the third class containing fourteen companies; and the first class

class only seven)—the choice would undoubtedly fall on the Proprietary Companies. The distinction of Mutual and Proprietary seems intended to combine the other two, but, we suspect, under no fixed limits or regulations. The Rock is a Proprietary Office, and differs only, as we believe, in one respect from the others, and that is, that none but the assured can hold shares. What the London and Westminster Mutual Life Assurance Society may mean by the following statement, we pretend not to comprehend:—it says that the principle upon which it is founded is mutual, and that ‘A mutual assurance *draws a distinct and broad line* between it and *all proprietary companies* ;’ but in the very next line we are told, ‘This society not only embodies *all the new features* of modern proprietary companies, but also preserves the characteristics of Mutual Assurance Societies.’ This is rather puzzling, and we leave it to others to unravel ; but Mr. de Morgan’s brief account of the first two (*x* and *y*) is clear enough.

‘The former have no capital, except what arises from their own accumulations, and each member is a guarantee to the rest for the fulfilment of all engagements. If the office possess a charter, this guarantee operates no further than to pledge the premiums already paid by any member for the discharge of all claims which arise before his own, since a corporation is considered in law as an individual. If, on the other hand, there be no charter, the whole fortune of every member is pledged for the discharge of all claims. The risk, however, at the commencement is not great in character, and small in amount ; and the quantity of risk diminishes so much faster than the amount increases, that it may safely be said there is nothing in the commercial world which approaches, even remotely, to the security of a well-established and prudently-managed insurance office.

‘A proprietary insurance office has a capital, the proprietors of which may or may not be insured in the office, and for which a bonus is paid in addition to the market rate of interest. It would perhaps be difficult, at the present time, to establish a new proprietary office with a very large capital. The public now begins to see that much capital is not necessary, and that nearly all the bonus which is paid for its use is so much taken away from the savings of the insured, without any adequate benefit received in return. One by one, the proprietary offices must (as some have done) admit the insured to a share in the profits,—the necessity for which will be taught by the decline of business, if not previously learnt.’—pp. 272, 273.

The leaning of Mr. de Morgan, though he does not say so in express terms, is evidently in favour of Proprietary Companies, as requiring less caution than the Mutual—and this, notwithstanding the successful practice of the Equitable Society. ‘I always,’ he says, ‘consider that society as a distinct and anomalous establishment, existing at this moment under circumstances of an unique

unique character. It is the result of an experiment which it was most important to try; but which, having been tried, need not be repeated.' Its present state is, in fact, the result of a *monopoly* which never can be repeated. When it was established, in 1702, the *Amicable*, which had existed from the beginning of the century, was the only society formed for the purpose of making assurances on lives; and in speaking of *that*, a writer already quoted observes, 'Nothing could exceed the injustice and improvidence of a plan which made no distinction between the old and the young in its premiums, and, by the annual division of its surplus, kept the society in a state of perpetual infancy.'

Our present author, among other remarks on the fashionable puffs, says:—

'Of one thing I am certain, that the magnificent style in which the prospectuses frequently indulge might often remind their readers of the unparalleled benefits which are promised by another description of traders, who vie with each other in describing the rare qualities of their several *blackings*. If there be in this country a person whose ambition it is to walk in the brightest boots to the cheapest insurance office, he has my pity: for, grant that he is ever able to settle where to send his servant, and it remains as difficult a question to what quarter he shall turn his own steps. The matter would be of no great consequence if persons desiring to insure could be told at once to throw aside every prospectus which contains a puff: unfortunately this cannot be done, as there are offices which may be in many circumstances the most eligible, and which adopt this method of advertising their claims. If these pompous announcements be intended to profess that every subscriber shall receive more than he pays, their falsehood is as obvious as their meaning: if not, their meaning is altogether concealed.

'Public ignorance of the principles of insurance is the thing to which these advertisements appeal: when it shall come to be clearly understood that in every office some must pay more than they receive, in order that others may receive more than they pay, such attempts to persuade the public of a certainty of universal profit will entirely cease.'—Preface, pp. xv., xvi.

When a person is making up his mind as to the choice of an office, it is very natural that his election should be likely to fall on that which offers the most reasonable terms—that is to say, where the amount of premium to be paid for a hundred pounds is less than in others: but this difference in the premium is not the only thing to be regarded. The difference of a few shillings per cent., more especially in a proprietary and participating establishment, is, we repeat, of little importance, provided they keep within the limits of those tables which have been constructed on the law of mortality, as deduced from the most approved statistical information, collected and registered from details of numerous

merous large and distinct masses of the population of this and other countries. As Mr. de Morgan observes—

‘There may be danger in the assumption of any table formed from experience; and this ought to operate powerfully as a caution against lightly admitting a change of premiums, on the authority of any small number of facts. But more particularly should this be attended to in the formation of new varieties of contingency offices, the chances of which have not yet stood the test of experience.’—p. 242.

The Professor treats in some detail of the valuation and distribution of the profits arising from insurances; and under this part of the subject, the matter being differently arranged in different offices, the following considerations, he says, might be addressed to any person who intends to assure his life :—

‘You are aware that the premium demanded of you is, avowedly, more than has hitherto been found sufficient for the purpose, the reason being, that it is impossible to settle the exact amount, on account of our not knowing whether the future and the past will coincide in giving the same law of mortality, and the same interest of money. The surplus arising from this overcharge, for the future existence of which it is hundreds to one, is now at your own disposal, and you must choose between one office and another, according to your intentions with regard to its ultimate destination. Firstly, if you doubt the general security of the plan of insurance, and are desirous of an absolute guarantee, independently of accumulations from premiums, there are offices which will, in consideration of the surplus aforesaid, pledge their proprietary capitals for the satisfaction of your ultimate demand upon them. Secondly, if, being of the opinion aforesaid, you think the whole surplus too much to pay for the guarantee, there are proprietary offices which retain a part of the profit in consideration of the risk of their capital, and return the remainder. Thirdly, if you wish the surplus premium, as fast as it is proved to be such, to be applied in obviating the necessity of any further overcharges, there are offices which divide the profits during the life of the insured, by means of a reduction of premium. Fourthly, if you wish the surplus to accumulate, and, feeling confidence in your own life, are willing to risk losing it (the *surplus*, remember) entirely if you die young, on condition of having it proportionally increased if you live to be old, there are offices which divide all or most of the profits among old members. Fifthly, if you would prefer a certainty of profit, die when you may, there are offices which at once admit new members who die early to a full participation in all advantages. The choice between these several modes must be made by yourself, according to your own inclinations, views of fairness, or particular circumstances.’—pp. 282, 283.

The great importance of choosing an office which allows a participation of profits, is exemplified by a Report put forth by the ‘Rock,’ in which it is stated that ‘In the case of a royal personage, lately deceased, whose life was largely assured for the benefit of his family, the Directors found, by a document in their possession,

possession, that, out of eleven offices granting him policies, all at the same time, and at a rate of premium varying from 4*l.* 4*s.* 2*d.* to 5*l.* 0*s.* 2*d.* per cent. (that of the Rock being 4*l.* 8*s.* 2*d.*), only five made any return of premium or additional bonus; and that, of these five, the Rock paid more bonus than either of the other four, in the proportion of 55*l.* 6*s.* to 38*l.* 17*s.* 9*d.*, to 35*l.* 12*s.* to 32*l.* 2*s.*, and to 12*l.* 4*s.* 8*d.*, on and over every one hundred pounds assured in each respectively.

Most of the offices, except those on the strict mutual principle, have three modes of distributing profits to the assured, who is generally allowed to make his choice among them. The first is that of fixed periodical additions to policies or sums assured: the second, periodical diminution of premiums—deferred payment of premiums, or payment of them for a fixed number of years—for all of which an equitable rate is professed to be calculated: the third is the addition to policies at deaths, according to the state of profits at the time, without reference to any particular periods of distribution. In the first of these, which is the most common, there is a great difference in different offices. Some make no distinction, in the sums to be appropriated, between the young and old assured; and some allow no portion to those who commence their assurance beyond a certain age. Some, perhaps the greater part of the proprietary offices, divide septennially; others quinquennially, and a few, but very few, annually,—to commence after the payment of a certain number of premiums. This last may perhaps be considered as the most equitable mode, enabling the survivors, in most cases, to receive a share of the profits proportioned to the sums they have paid in premiums; but it is the least of all favourable to the increase of the assets of the office,—a very considerable portion of their capitals arising from profits derived from the length of time between the periodical divisions. The Equitable, the only one that has adopted the decennial rule, has enriched itself chiefly by its long periodical division.

To illustrate this, let us suppose the assured to die just before he has completed the period of ten years: his representatives receive no part of the profits which have accrued in that time; nay, we are told, as to some offices, that if the 31st December, for instance, should be the termination of the period, and if the assured should die before midnight of that day, though he had paid all the premiums required within the period, his executor would be considered as entitled only to the bare sum assured, and not to any share of the profits. If this be so, such a practice, we hesitate not to say, is unjust, and we have no doubt that, upon trial, it would be pronounced illegal. If the last premium of the period be

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paid up—it matters not in what month, week, or day the assured dies—the executor ought to receive the fair share of the profits. A respectable office would not attempt to take an advantage of this kind. It is enough that all the profits are withheld from those who die before the payment of the stipulated number of premiums. The longer the interval of the periods of division, the greater will be the probable number that may be expected to die without participation, and, consequently, the larger the profits of the office and of those who survive.* Another source of profit to the offices arises from lapsed policies, the premiums paid upon them being so much pure gain. Formerly they were much more numerous than at present. The competition among offices, each trying to beat the other down, has taught those who assure, that a policy even of a very few years' standing is worth something, and most of the offices do not decline giving something for it (though considerably less than the amount of the premiums paid). If more should be demanded on the score of the office having incurred no loss by the risk, and having enjoyed the accumulated interest, Mr. de Morgan furnishes the answer which the office might give: 'The risk which turned out favourably in your case did not produce the same result in another—and it is the very essence of an insurance office, that those who live pay for those who die;' but he should have added—and those who die before the completion of a period pay to those who outlive it.

There is, however, we really believe, a great degree of liberality shown by the established offices to the assured or their representatives, whenever a case deserving benevolent consideration occurs; and it must be owned they have good reason to be cautious in this department of their procedure. We understand that instances of gross deception are not uncommon, such as the substitution of a healthy subject for examination by the medical officer in the place of one that would be rejected, concealment of disease, forged certificates of age to lower the rate of premium, &c. When a creditor proposes an insurance on the life of his debtor, it is particularly necessary to be satisfied of the identity of the latter, as this step is rarely had recourse to be-

* The general use, by insurance offices, of the word 'profits' is an abuse of the term, they being wholly contingent and remote. It cannot for a moment be questioned that, instead of 'profit,' the insurance office must sustain a loss by every insurer who dies before the amount paid by him in premiums, with the accumulated interest, shall be equivalent to the amount of his policy—say from 15 to 35 annual premiums, according to the age of the insured—yet, in most of these offices, the representatives share in the *profits*, should the insured die immediately after seven payments. The equitable rule would be, to assign the *bonus* to such only as had survived the expectation of life, according to the generally received law of mortality; or who had paid in premiums, with interest upon them, a sum equal to that for which the life was insured.

fore an apprehension is entertained of approaching death. Such and many other deceptions are practised against insurance offices; and, although the strongest evidence may have been produced in a court of justice to prove the fraud, the office, whether as plaintiff or defendant, has almost always failed, by the leaning of the jury to the weak, and against the strong: the one party is poor, the other is rich—the one is an individual, the other a company—and the verdict is too often given in direct contradiction to the summing up of the judge. It is quite fair that when there is a doubt the individual should have the benefit; but jurors should remember that they are sworn to apply all their faculties in arriving at the just decision.

By the act of 14 Geo. III. chap. 38, levelled at *gambling*, the insurance offices were meant to be protected against one very important risk of fraud. It enacts that no insurance on life shall be valid unless the party insuring has a plain legitimate interest in the party whose name is inserted in the policy. By the laws of France and most of the continental states, all insurances of this class are absolutely forbidden, not for the prevention of gambling, (which is rather encouraged,) but in order to guard society against the risk of the persons assuring contriving the death of the assured. Now we are sorry to say that this is supposed to have happened in a few instances in our own country, and the tendency to it ought to be more strictly prohibited by law. In short, a decisive blow should be struck at the practice of assigning policies to, or purchasing them in the market by, those who are strangers to the parties whose names the policies bear, and who can have no other interest in them than the desire that such policies should speedily become *claims*—whose interest lies in the death, not in the life of the *assured*.

A very odd case was tried recently before Lord Abinger. Two young women, the daughters of a deceased officer, with no other property whatsoever but pensions of 10*l.* a-year from the Ordnance, lived a few miles out of town with a person who had married, we believe, their sister-in-law, also in very reduced circumstances. However, they all came to London as the winter was setting in, took lodgings, and the elder girl, having just attained her twenty-first year, was sent sometimes alone, sometimes with her married sister, to no less than eight or ten offices, to effect an insurance at each on her own life. Being extremely handsome, and in the full bloom and vigour of health, she was admired and courteously received at the several establishments; and, strange as it may appear, though she could assign no other reason for wishing to assure her life, than that she was told it

was right to do so, she actually succeeded, with five of the offices, in effecting policies in her own name, some for two, others for three years, for no less a sum in all than 16,000*l.*! This was about the end of November, 1830. One evening in December the whole party went together to the theatre—they took some oysters and other refreshments on their return—this young and beautiful person went to bed—from which she never arose, but to be placed in her coffin. A *post-mortem* examination took place; a great effusion was found on the brain, caused by extraordinary violence of vomiting, the consequence, it was stated, of some powders given by her sister-in-law. The husband, as *trustee*, lost no time in applying for the amount of two of the policies that had been assigned to him, but the offices very properly refused payment: they ought to have refused the insurance. He takes the alarm and goes with his family to France, and some years afterwards brings his action through an agent, not venturing, it would seem, to appear himself; and for once the insurance office got a verdict in its favour!

The Act of 14 Geo. III. is in fact a dead letter. It merely enacts the voidance of the policy. Will the holder, if rejected, prosecute the claim?—would he be entitled to a verdict?—what damages could he obtain? The two parties, the assured and the office, are frequently *participes criminis*, and both interested in keeping up the policy; and what is a third party (who holds the policy) to gain by rendering it void? The only gainer would be the office, from the premiums that may have been paid: *the Act does not say that they shall be refunded, nor does it award any penalty on the offenders.*

In our former article we noticed the indignation with which Mr. Babbage commented on the practice of almost all the Companies in paying a commission to agents, solicitors, or brokers who bring assurances to their respective offices. He relates, among others, the case of a clergyman who desired his attorney to make choice of an office to assure his life for 2000*l.* The attorney applied to the office for which he was agent, and which happened to be one of the few which made no return of any part of the profits. The consequence was, that at the clergyman's death the family received only the original sum, 2000*l.*, whereas, had the attorney gone to the Equitable, he would have received for the widow and orphan children 3200*l.* If this agent concealed from his employer that such a result would be among the probabilities, he no doubt acted dishonestly; but we cannot agree in the sweeping inference of Mr. Babbage. The following is the view which Mr. de Morgan takes of this matter:—
 'As

‘As between one office and another, the attorney is in a judicial capacity; and, as regards his client, he is already the paid protector of the interests of another person. He has, therefore, no liberty of choice between one office and another, but is already bound to choose that which he judges best for his client. All who have written on the subject of late years have attacked this *bribe*, for such it is; but they have directed all their censures against the offices, as if they were the only parties to blame. If, indeed, the bribe had been offered to the needy and ignorant only, this partial distribution of blame might have been allowed; but when the parties who receive the bribe are men of education, and moving in those professions which bring the successful to affluence, I do not see the justice of allowing them to escape. I have little doubt that an increasing sense of right and wrong will banish this unworthy practice, either by failure of givers or receivers. A barrister cannot offer an attorney commission on the briefs which he brings, nor can a physician pay an apothecary for his recommendation; a jury never receives a hint that the plaintiff will give commission on the damages which they award; and the time will come when the offer of money to a person whose unbiassed opinion is already the property of another will be deemed to be what it really is, namely, *bribery and corruption*. It is one among many proofs how low is the standard of collective morality; and how easy it is for honourable individuals to do in concert that from which they would separately shrink.’—pp. 258, 259.

We suspect Mr. de Morgan to be much better versed in the doctrine of chances and probabilities than in the intercourse between barristers and attorneys, doctors and apothecaries; but we would ask him, what is a poor man, living in the heart of Wales, and wishing to effect an insurance, to do, but apply to his man of business, or the agent of some office, who must take his examination, send it up to the office, employ a medical man, &c. &c.; and can it be expected he shall do all this without remuneration? We believe that the whole of the country business with the offices in London is, and must be, transacted through agency; and, though each agent may have his peculiar office, yet it is undoubtedly his duty to explain to his private employer, as far as he knows, the different terms on which different offices grant assurances. For residents in London, we believe, agency is not given, as the party can himself apply.

On the whole we cannot consider these institutions in any other light than as great public benefits, of which almost every class of society may avail themselves with advantage to their rising families. Like all other human institutions, they are liable to be misconducted and abused; the good, however, we are satisfied, greatly predominates. Take, for instance, a case of very common occurrence: suppose a clergyman, happy in his domestic circle, educating his children liberally, and with his 400*l.* or 500*l.* a-year distributing consolation to his parishioners. Possessing

only a life interest in his income, no sooner is the thread snapped than beggary stares his family in the face—the widow and children are at once turned out upon the wide world, or doomed perhaps to receive a grudging pittance from some relation. Now, all this might have been avoided by an appropriation of some 50*l.* or 60*l.* a-year out of the life income, through the instrumentality of an assurance office.

It is the same in almost every walk of life. Lawyers, physicians, surgeons, and apothecaries, marrying young, and solely dependent on their practice; officers of the army and navy, who can lay by a pittance of their pay; clerks in public offices, in banks, and counting-houses; tradesmen and artificers,—in short almost every description of persons may profit in this manner, and a great mass of misery be avoided by the sacrifice of a very small portion of income. Even the highest personages of the realm, not excluding royalty itself, may profit by these offices, when embarrassed in pecuniary matters; by them the pressure of debt may be relieved, and the creditor satisfied, and incumbrances on entailed estates removed, on reasonable and honourable conditions, infinitely preferable to what can be had from turning to the common run of money-lenders.

We do not think it worth while to go into any argument with certain persons who object to all life-assurance as a species of gambling—nor with those who, looking to the incorrect phrase, lose sight of what is really meant, and prose about impious interference with the *fiat* of Providence. There is, however, a more business-like class who object to the plan. These contend that, if the annual sums paid by the assured, as premiums, were put out at compound interest, the produce would exceed what the assured or his representatives will receive from the office. This is looking at the subject in a very narrow and mistaken point of view: it supposes life certain to a given extent. Mr. de Morgan says the best thing an individual could do with a small sum (say 100*l.*), so as to have perfect security for its return, would be to invest it in the funds at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. 'He might also invest the interest,* and thus obtain compound interest:' but he observes, 'it is not easy for an individual to do this: unless he provide an agent to draw the dividends immediately on their becoming due, various circumstances will happen to prevent the immediate investment of the interest. It is not at all an unfair calculation to suppose that, upon each half-yearly dividend, a month will be lost, so that nominal compound interest for forty-two years will only be really for thirty-five years.' But he has elsewhere assigned a much better reason for giving a preference to assurance offices. He says:—

'Probably,

On Life Insurance.

‘ Probably, if the following question were put to all those whose lives are now insured, What is the *advantage* which you derive from investing your surplus income in an insurance office? more than half would reply, The *certainty* of my executors receiving a sum at my death, were that to take place to-morrow. This is but half an answer; for not only does the office undertake the equalization of life, as above described, but also the *return of the sums invested, with compound in-*

The object is to provide a *certainty* against the casualties of life which render it *uncertain*; and to secure a sum of money greater than would be secured by any other means, let death come when it may. It is not a question whether 1000*l.* placed in the funds to accumulate (which every one has not the means of doing), or the insurance of a life for 1000*l.*, is preferable—the question is simply this, whether it is more advantageous to cause a small annual sum to be paid *for insuring* 1000*l.*, or to place the amount of that small sum annually, at compound interest, in the funds. Let us take an example from two or three different offices, and see what the several results will be.

A young man of thirty years of age insures his life for 1000*l.*, say with the Rock—the premium 2*l.* 12*s.* per cent., or thereabouts; the probability of his life may be taken at thirty years. Now 2*l.* 12*s.* put out at 3 per cent. compound interest, for thirty years, would produce (omitting fractions) £1236
The sum insured is £1000

His loss by insuring would thus be £236
But the Rock divides profits septennially—at least
8 per cent. each period, of which may be reckoned
four in thirty years—the bonus then would be £320

The gain by insuring, instead of funding at compound
interest £83

Try the same case in the Palladium—
The loss as before would be £236
By a statement of profits now before us, a life of thirty
would receive every seven years about 86*l.* 10*s.*, and
four periods the bonus would be £346

Gain by an assurance in the Palladium £109

Taking the age of fifty, the result would be pretty nearly the same; but if we suppose the assured to have died within the first period of seven years—say at the end of six years—all other points the

the same, the accumulated compound interest on 2 <i>l.</i> 12 <i>s.</i> for 1000 <i>l.</i> , would amount to	£168
But the survivor would receive by insuring the life	£1000

The gain in this case to the assured, and consequent loss to the office is	£831
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In the Equitable, as at present constituted, the young insured would not fare so well: let us take the case as before of the probability of a life reaching thirty years. The plan of excluding all the assured from any participation of profits, until they come within the 5000 oldest subscribers, is not a trifling feature:—one must live, on an average of chances, at least fifteen years before he reaches admission into that enviable number; and in the next fifteen, should he survive, he might, perhaps, get the profits of one decennial period; which, after deducting the premium and simple interest upon them, will give him at the end of thirty years, at the most, about 150*l.* But, if the young obtain only so small a pittance, an insurance made at an advanced age is ruinous. Take an example of one supposed to be made in the year 1820 for 1000*l.*, the age fifty-five, premium 53*l.* In fifteen years, that is in 1835, he might hope to get within the envied pale; but the division of profits being in 1839, he will then have assigned to him (payable at his death) 3 per cent. for the remaining four or five years, say 150*l.* At this time, that is in nineteen years, he will have paid in premiums with interest at 3 per cent. £1331

Will he be entitled (when the policy becomes a claim) to £150

Balance of money advanced, with interest	£1181
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He is now in his seventy-fifth year, and enters on a fresh decennial period, which if he should survive, and it is about ten to one against him, he will have paid a further sum of £607

His share of profits will now be about £300

There remains a loss of	£307
Add former loss	£1181

£1488

Deduct original sum insured	£1000
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The actual loss to the assured, and gain to the office	£488
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How different would the result have been under the old regulations! In this case the representatives of the assured would have

have received 1610*l.*, in addition to the original 1000*l.*, instead of sustaining the above loss : for we have the late actuary's own statement, put forth somewhat triumphantly, that the Equitable, up to the year 1820, had added to a policy of twenty years' standing 77 per cent. ; to one of thirty years' 161 per cent. ; to one of forty years' 280 per cent. ; and to one of fifty years' 401 per cent. ! and yet, knowing well what the result of the change must inevitably be, he actually triumphed in the loss which the insured must incur, and in the certainty of the great benefit which the office would receive, from the device of his own ingenuity. Commenting on the history and practice of the Equitable Society, our Professor pithily says :—

'The general lesson taught by it is,—be cautious ; but, among other things, be cautious of carrying caution so far as to leave a part of your own property for the benefit of those who are in no way related to you. If there be a Charybdis in an insurance office, there is also a Scylla ; the mutual insurer, who is too much afraid of dispensing the profits to those who die *before him*, will have to leave his own share for those who die *after him*. Reversing the fable of Spenser, we should write upon the door of every mutual office but one, *Be wary* ; but upon that one should be written, *Be not too wary*, and over it, "Equitable Society." ' p. 281.

Our sole object in recurring to this subject has been to inculcate the necessity of exercising great caution in a very delicate matter of practice. We cannot shut our eyes and ears to the numberless cases in which quiet individuals and families, especially those residing at a distance from town, are injured from placing rash reliance on the pompous invitations of speculating quacks—nor do we think, on the other hand, that the established reputation of an insurance company ought to protect its peculiar manœuvres from scrutiny. Study well, we repeat, the names of the real working directors—distrust placardings of dukes and lords, who can know nothing about the matter, and probably never heard of it—and look sharp, when you see unparalleled advantages offered, as to the number of years during which the generous association propounding such benefits has been able to exhibit its attractions. *Per contra*, do not allow yourself to be inveigled into an absurdly disadvantageous arrangement, merely because the establishment that offers it is of old standing, undoubted firmness, and thinks it may take any liberties with the gaping mass.

- ART. II.—1. *Diary in America*. By Captain Frederick Marryat, R.N. 3 vols., 12mo. London, 1839.
 2. *Travels in North America*. By the Hon. Charles Augustus Murray. 2 vols., 8vo. London, 1839.

OF hasty tourists in the United States we have had enough; but, probably, a score or two of steam-passengers may have favoured the world with their lucubrations, before the booksellers adopt the opinion of the reviewers. We expect little satisfactory information on really serious points from any one that shall but have gone in the usual perfunctory manner over ground lately traversed by Mrs. Trollope, Captain Hall, and Mr. Hamilton; three as clever persons, certainly, as have indited books of travels within our time—and as different from each other (judging by their works) in temper, habits, opinions, and manners, as any three clever persons that could well have been selected from the same (or nearly the same) class of society. The shrewd, homely, sarcastic dowager—the acute, indefatigable, restlessly peering and analyzing sailor and *savant*—the elegant, contemplative, well-read soldier and gentleman, uniting (rare combination!) fastidiousness of taste with a broad, rich vein of humour—all three gave us representations of the sayings and doings of Brother Jonathan, which tallied to a nicety in the general effect;—the variety in minor details being merely sufficient to prove that they had not copied each other, but all sketched from nature and coloured on the spot. Of such life as rapid strangers can see and apprehend at all, they were not likely to omit any very important features; and it may be long before any English writer of equal talents shall have had the opportunity of observing, during a considerable space of time, the interior existence of the Anglo-Americans. Here, however, are two new adventurers, each of whose performances will, no doubt, attract some attention, which, in regard to mere amusement at all events, they will both repay.

Captain Marryat stands second in merit to no living novelist but Miss Edgeworth. His happy delineations and contrasts of character, and easy play of native fun, redeem a thousand faults of verbosity, clumsiness, and coarseness. His strong sense and utter superiority to affectation of all sorts command respect; and in his quiet effectiveness of circumstantial narrative, he sometimes approaches old Defoe. There is less of caricature about his pictures than in those of any contemporary humorist—unless, perhaps, Morier; and he shows far larger and maturer knowledge of the real workings of human nature than any of the band, except the exquisite writer we have just named,
 and

and Mr. Theodore Hook, of whom praise is equally superfluous. Had Captain Marryat gone to America ten or twelve years sooner, the literary result must have been striking indeed; but he encountered very serious obstacles in 1837, for by that time his own fame as a painter of manners had been widely spread—his name was as familiar in the Broadway as in New Burlington Street—and the moment his arrival was announced, it was taken for granted that he had brought his notebook with him, and would, on his return to the old world, entertain us with a set of sketches as broad as Mrs. Trollope's, relieved by disquisitions as bold, though not, perhaps, so ingenious as Basil Hall's, and conclusions as anti-democratic as Hamilton's, conveyed in diction more likely to be understood by the democracy proper of America. The consequence was, that though the popular English author received at the outset numerous invitations, he found the society into which these drew him uniformly stiffened by his presence, and after a variety of good-natured explanations had failed to remove this 'cold obstruction,' his pride rebelled against the notion of further experiments. He distinctly says that he very soon ceased to accept proffered hospitalities in New York; and we gather that he followed the same course generally in the other cities of the Union. Excepting, apparently, a very few cases of family alliance or old acquaintanceship, he seems to have contented himself with what a traveller without a single letter of introduction might have seen; and though some of his best anecdotes are connected with the Transatlantic celebrity of his own works, and the consequent curiosity of individuals, it is obvious that he endeavoured throughout to keep his *incognito*. However, the Captain's eyes, and ears too, are of the quickest; though no great admirer of Miss Martineau, he knows '*how to observe*;'—the Americans live in the sun habitually—and he appears to have made it his special business to master their current literature. He has, accordingly, gleaned a fair allowance of traits of manners, which he presents commonly in the same racy style with which his novels have made us all familiar; and it need scarcely be added, that he has given some striking facts, and many vigorous views and reasonings respecting the republican polity—but, on the whole, it is no wonder that he cannot be said to have made any very remarkable addition to the graver collectanea of his predecessors. His humour is his own—and his masculine understanding must be allowed to confirm, if these wanted any confirmation, the general conclusions in which Hall, Hamilton, and De Tocqueville had previously concurred.

The Hon. Charles Augustus Murray is a pilgrim of another breed.

breed. We laid down his volumes, which are full of Eton, with the impression that he had gone to America straight from school—but, if Lodge's *Peerage* speaks truth, he is a gentleman of mature years, and Master of the Royal Household. His juvenile spirits, therefore, are only to be envied;—he is evidently not without cleverness—and we have been pleased, on the whole, with the gaiety and good humour of his narrative.

This airy gentleman appears to have met with very flattering attentions in the course of his travels. He is careful to record that among his fellow passengers out, chiefly Irish labourers, he was distinguished as 'the young Scotch Lord,' and that when he visited the Havannah, the hospitable tobacconists received him as 'a grandee of the first class,'—and we infer from his tone *passim*, that the younger son of a Scotch Earl is as great a star in Uncle Sam's republic as a Prince Pückler in the kingdom of Cockaigne. We must remember, however, that this was probably the first genuine specimen of the modern dandy genus that had been exhibited in those regions, and therefore allow for the natural influence, not only of rank among radicals, but of blue satin and French polish, suddenly outshining stiff frills and Day and Martin.

Both of these authors are good enough to offer us, *inter alia*, sundry specimens of what they consider as the peculiar phraseology of Brother Jonathan; and Captain Marryat has certainly produced some which had for ourselves the charm of novelty. But, excepting when the phrase is distinctly traceable to something peculiar in the habits or circumstances of the Transatlantic community, we receive everything of this class with extreme suspicion; or rather we entertain no doubt at all that the discovery is simply that of a transplanted provincialism, which the man of Mayfair might have detected as easily by a trip into Norfolk, Devon, or Lancashire. The *discoveries*, however, are occasionally quite astounding;—and we must allow that Mr. Murray outshines in this department even Miss Martineau. He, for example, commemorates and eulogises

'the various tints which clothe the *American* woods in autumn, or, to use *their own poetical and admirable* expression, in the *fall*.'—vol. i. p. 78.

Now, we were informed by 'an awfully ancient old woman,' whose suggestions we often find of special benefit to us in our literary, as well as in our political inquiries, that this 'admirable expression' had been familiar to her ear from a period nearly transcending that of legal memory—nay, only last week her own youngest grand-daughter casually mentioned it as the practice

tice in the family to give all the children physic ‘spring and fall.’ Emboldened by this hint we repaired to the British Museum, and requested our friend Sir Henry Ellis to assist us in an accurate search through the lexicons and glossaries, printed and MSS., of that unrivalled collection; which being performed accordingly, we at length detected this very word ‘fall’ in a dictionary of the English tongue by one Samuel Johnson, LL.D., with this interpretation:—‘Autumn, the fall of the leaf; the time when the leaves drop from the trees;’ and an example from a translation of Juvenal, executed by John Dryden, Esq., viz. :—

‘What crowds of patients the town doctor kills,
Or how last *fall* he raised the weekly bills.’

Again, at vol. i. p. 61, the Master of the Household informs us that a wheeled vehicle plying for hire in the streets of New York is there called ‘a hack.’ Now, our industrious researches have enabled us to point out to Mr. Murray two Cisatlantic examples of the same ugly vocable in the same sense. The first occurs in a ballad ‘On Conveyancing,’ published in London, A.D. 1839—

‘There’s always HACKS about in packs,
Wherein you may be shaken;
And Jarvis is not always drunk,
Tho’ always overtaken.
The horses have been broken well;
All danger is rescinded—
For some have broken both their knees,
And some are broken-winded.’

Hood’s Own, p. 108.

The second example will satisfy Mr. Murray that Hood *americanizes* not—it is from a much older work—*Pope’s Own*. There—in the mighty mother of Dulness is represented as summoning her children and vassals about her misty throne—and they come at her command—

‘A motley mixture! in long wigs, in bags,
In silks, in crapes, in garters, and in rags,
From drawing-rooms, from colleges, from garrets,
On horse, on foot, in HACKS, and gilded chariots.’

Another word of homely enough sound puzzles Mr. Murray exceedingly in its *American* application. At p. 120, vol. ii., he says, ‘We pitched our camp in a well-wooded valley called here *a bottom*;’ and again, at p. 125, ‘I started [in pursuit of deer] with two soldiers to a large grove *or bottom*.’ If Mr. Murray had ever followed field sports in old England, this difficulty would not have embarrassed his Transatlantic cynegetics. *Bottom*, in old and universal English, means *valley*—Johnson’s examples are

are from the Bible—Shakspeare—and Addison. Valleys are occasionally clothed with woods and groves—but such garniture is not more essential to them than the Windsor uniform is to a Highlander. ‘I saw by night,’ says Zechariah (i. 8), ‘and behold a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle-trees that were in the bottom.’

Mr. Murray mentions various other perversions of words which he acknowledges for English, and sometimes he chastises these with as near an approach to severity as is consistent with ‘the nice conduct of a clouded cane.’ He is indignant, for example, to find ‘a small tavern kept by a general’—‘the broken wheel of his waggon [not hack] mended by a colonel’—and ‘day-labourers and mechanics speaking of each other as *this gentleman* and *that gentleman*’ (vol. i. p. 120). We are old enough to remember our own volunteer times when many a British major stooped to measure ribbons, and even colonels of light-horse might be detected in the act of weighing figs—and such heroes bore their military titles habitually in all their private circles. *General* is a bigger word, no doubt—probably his Yankee friends had some time commanded brigaded train-bands, and ‘once a provost always a provost’ is a saying which the ‘young Scotch Lord’ might have heard of. He states that ‘among other civilized nations a General is a man so named for the length or celebrity of his military service;’—but, we believe, if he inquires at the Horse Guards, he will find that many a gallant English soldier lays a white head in the grave without having been ‘so named,’ and that fortunate individuals occasionally attain to be ‘so named’ without either antediluvian length, or postdiluvian celebrity of ‘service.’ ‘Other civilized nations,’ he adds, ‘reserve the title of *Gentleman* for the man who is by birth, education, or habits enabled to follow literary, scientific, or liberal pursuits, which, by refining his manners and enlarging his mind, distinguish him from the great mass of mankind.’ If Mr. Murray studies the matter more leisurely, he will discover that ‘even in Britain’ all attorneys are *ex officio* ‘gentlemen’ Nay, if he will take some opportunity of properly disguising his person, and trust himself for once to the interior of one of those Ark-like ‘hacks’ which now and then rattle even through Pimlico, every cookmaid they pick up shall be ‘This here lady,’ and the rival *cad* that would fain have intercepted her, by summary *diminutio capitis* proclaimed ‘No gentleman.’

We recommend, to both Mr. Murray and Captain Marryat, in case of a second edition, careful reference to an useful manual lately published, the ‘General Dictionary of Provincialisms,’ by William Holloway (Lewes, 1838); and also to ‘The Classical Dictionary

Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue,' by Captain Grose of jolly renown, who effectually vindicates for the old country a very large proportion of the queer eating and drinking phrases that struck our authors as of *genuine* Yankee growth—e. g. *corned* for *drunk*, &c. &c. The substantive *slang* is not to be found either in Johnson or Richardson—it means the dialect of that section of the community who are, and consider themselves to be, likely to end the scene with being slung up. * Of this dialect Grose is the Suidas—and it is no wonder that an English *gentleman* travelling in America should be advised to carry that hand-book with him, for, though nothing could be more false than Cobbett's coarse saying, 'the Adam and Eve of this Paradise came out of Newgate,' it is quite certain that some of the States were used by us, during several generations, for the purposes which Botany Bay and Van Diemen's Land serve now. The real peculiarity and piquancy of the current vulgar phraseology in the Union consists in the ludicrous jumbling of words and images derived from such settlers as Defoe has immortalised in his history of Moll Flanders, with others as obviously inherited from the venerable *pilgrims* who drew up the Blue Laws of Massachusetts—all delivered with an accent clearly traceable to the drawling whine and snuffle of the old conventicle preachers—which melodious lugubrosity was preserved to within no distant period, if indeed it be yet exploded, among the lower sectaries of the mother country. Captain Marryat describes and comments upon the eternal *hum* that breaks American colloquy, without being aware that it is produced by Ben Jonson whenever he brings a puritan on the stage.

Most of the following (from Captain Marryat) are specimens of the really indigenous class:—

'In the West, where steam-navigation is so abundant, when they ask you to drink they say, "Stranger, will you take in wood?"—the vessels taking in wood as fuel to keep the steam up, and the person taking in spirits to keep *his* steam up.—To make tracks—to walk away. "Well, now, I shall make tracks:"—from foot-tracks in the snow.

'In the Western States, where the racoon is plentiful, they use the abbreviation '*coon*' when speaking of people. When at New York, I went into a hair-dresser's shop to have my hair cut: there were two young men from the west—one under the barber's hands, the other standing by him. "I say," said the one who was having his hair cut, "I hear Captain M—— is in the country." "Yes," replied the other, "so they say: I should like to see the '*coon*.'"

"I'm a *gone 'coon*" implies "I am distressed—or ruined—or lost." I once asked the origin of this expression, and was very gravely told as follows:—"There is a Captain Martin Scott in the United States army who is a remarkable shot with a rifle. He was raised, I believe, in Vermont.

Vermont. His fame was so considerable through the State that even the animals were aware of it. He went out one morning with his rifle, and spying a racoon upon the upper branches of a high tree, brought his gun up to his shoulder; when the racoon, perceiving it, raised his paw up for a parley. 'I beg your pardon, mister,' said the racoon, very politely; 'but may I ask you if your name is Scott?' 'Yes,' replied the captain. 'Martin Scott?' continued the racoon. 'Yes,' replied the Captain. 'Captain Martin Scott?' still continued the animal. 'Yes,' replied the captain, 'Captain Martin Scott.' 'Oh! then,' says the animal, 'I may just as well come down, for I'm a *gone 'coon*.'

'At a rustic dance a Kentuckian said to an acquaintance of mine, in reply to his asking the name of a very fine girl, "That's my sister, stranger; and I flatter myself that she shows the *nastiest* ankle in all Kentuck." *Unde derivatur?* From the constant rifle-practice in that State, a good shot or a pretty shot is termed also a nasty shot, because it would make a *nasty* wound: *ergo*, a *nice* or pretty ankle becomes a *nasty* one.

'The term for all baggage, especially in the south or west, is *plunder*.' This has been derived from the buccancers, who for so long a time infested the bays and creeks near the mouth of the Mississippi, and whose luggage was probably very correctly so designated.

'The gamblers on the Mississippi use a very refined phrase for "cheating"—"playing the advantages over him." But, as may be supposed, the principal terms used are those which are borrowed from trade and commerce. The rest, or remainder, is usually termed the balance. "Put some of those apples into a dish, and the *balance* into the store-room." When a person has made a mistake, or is out in his calculation, they say, "You missed a figure that time." In a skirmish last war, the fire from the British was very severe, and the men in the American ranks were falling fast, when one of the soldiers stepped up to the commanding officer and said, "Colonel, don't you think that we might compromise this affair?" "Well, I reckon I should have no objection to *submit it to arbitration* myself," replied the Colonel.

'Even the thieves must be commercial in their ideas. One rogue meeting another, asked him what he had done that morning; "Not much," was the reply, "I've only *realized* this umbrella."

'A lady was economically inclined, and in cutting out some shirts for her husband, resolved that they should not descend much lower than his hips. She wound up her arguments by observing that linen was a very expensive article, and that she could not see what on earth was the reason that people should stuff so much *capital* into their pantaloons.

'The verb "to fix" is universal. It means to do anything. "Shall I *fix* your coat or your breakfast first?" That is, "Shall I brush your coat, or *get ready* your breakfast first?"

'In the West, when you stop at an inn, they say, "What will you have? Brown meal and common doings, or white wheat and chicken *fixings*;" that is, "Will you have pork and brown bread, or white bread and fried chicken?" Also, "Will you have a *feed* or a *check*?" —a dinner or a luncheon?'

The

The *chicken fixings* are superb; but *check* and *feed* are no more American than *hack* or *fall*.*

'At one town, where I had stopped, I had been reposing more than two hours when my door was opened; but this was too common a circumstance for me to think anything of it: the people would come into my room whether I was in bed or out of bed, dressed or not dressed, and, if I expostulated, they would reply, "Never mind, *we* don't care, Captain." On this occasion I called out, "Well, what do you want?"

"Are you Captain M——?" said the person walking up to the bed where I was lying. "Yes, I am," replied I. "Well, I reckon I wouldn't allow you to go through our town without seeing you any how. Of all the *humans*, you're the one I most wish to see." I told him I was highly flattered.'

'I was amused by a reply given me by an American in office here. I asked how much his office was worth, and his answer was six hundred dollars, besides *stealings*. This was, at all events, frank and honest: in England the word would have been softened down to *perquisites*. I afterwards found that it was a common expression in the States to say a place was worth so much—besides *cheatage*.†

We have extracted these specimens as, to our fancy, entertaining, but without attaching any sort of importance to them. We can have no doubt that American gentlemen, and ladies, too, often use the phraseology of the vulgar about them in mere playfulness, and that even Captain Marryat now and then failed to detect their *drolling*. It is probable enough, however, that the American newspapers, being commonly and necessarily written in the style most acceptable to the basest of the populace, their readers of the higher *grades* may become so very familiar with dirty, ungrammatical slang, as to employ it sometimes without recollection of its sources; and if our own Morning Post and John Bull were to get as deeply infected with the Cockney gibberish as the infamous unstamped prints about London are, we should have serious apprehensions for the colloquial diction of Almack's'.

The vast increase of intercourse occasioned by the establishment of Atlantic steam navigation will soon make the upper classes of the two countries better acquainted with each other than they have been since the gentry of our old colonies laid aside the custom of sending their young men to be educated

* Sir W. Scott somewhere records that the collation to which the baillies of Edinburgh adjourned, after a public execution (in the old time), was called *the dead-chark*.

† The oddest-looking Americanisms are often, if we examine them, mere variations of some common Anglicism. Mrs. Trollope, for instance, amused all of us with the adjective *jam*, in the sense of *neat*, *smart*, or *spruce*. 'I can't go to meeting, I'm not *jam*.' An English housemaid would have said, 'I'm not in apple-pie order;' or, shortly, perhaps, 'I'm not apple-pie to-day.' The materials for the pie require to be nicely measured and arranged—hence the old vernacularism;—and we presume similar care is called for as to the confection of the ovenless log-house,

in the schools and universities of England. Already we begin to gather the fruits of this mighty innovation. Americans of mature years and tastes, of high attainments, character, and honour, mingle already among us, and will continue more and more to do so: how different from the raw, petulant striplings that used to excite our astonishment, and justify the Chinese definition, 'Englishmen of the second chopstick!' In return, America will be visited by abundance of English gentlemen, and ladies also, who have no intention of turning a penny by a tour. The result, as regards our present subject, will be, that nobody on this side of the water will affect to doubt the existence of a refined class of society on the other, numerically as large in proportion to the rest, and as nearly on a par with the social aristocracies of Europe, as any rational person could have looked for: while English people must at last open their eyes to a fact, which a very moderate degree of sagacity might have anticipated, namely, that the middling and lower orders of the United States are faithful representatives of what our own would soon be, had they no authoritative institutions and examples to exert a constant and powerful, though often unappreciated, control over their modes of thinking, speaking, and acting. In truth, we have already sufficient grounds for extending some remarks just hazarded about American peculiarities of speech, to the peculiarities of manners mostly dwelt upon by our recent reporters—even the sharpest of the set. At least we shrewdly suspect that if Hall or Marryat, before going to America, had scrambled about this United Kingdom on coach tops, taken *feeds* and *checks* in company with bagmen for a year or two on end, diversified with residences of a fortnight or three weeks at Norwich, Nottingham, Hull, Paisley, and Belfast—their descriptions of Transatlantic manners might have been as rich as we have them; but their critical disquisitions thereupon would have been neither so *lengthy* nor so

Captain Marryat is startled (vol. i., p. 66) at the wonderful stir created in an American trading town by the death of a leading merchant—vessels in the harbour with colours half-mast high—multitudes of citizens in the funeral procession, &c. &c. If the Captain had chanced to be in Bristol or Cork on a like occasion, he would have witnessed exactly the same thing—but he was thinking of the profound apparent indifference of Babylonian London, which probably does not at this moment contain one man whose *exit* would create the slightest bustle—except *the Duke*.

In p. 211, vol. i., we have this story—

"I witnessed, during my short stay here, that indifference to the destruction of life, so very remarkable in this country. The rail-car crushed

crushed the head of a child of about seven years old, as it was going into the engine-house: the other children ran to the father, a blacksmith, who was at work at his forge close by, crying out "Father, Billy killed." The man put down his hammer, walked leisurely to where the boy lay in a pool of his own blood, took up the body, and returned with it under his arm to his house. In a short time, the hammer rang upon the anvil as before.'

This is very distressing; but Captain Marryat might have witnessed similar things every month in the year had it ever been his lot to sojourn in Birmingham or Sheffield—

Which dark dense wreaths of cloudy volumes cloak,
And mark for leagues around the place of smoke.'

We wonder the *novelist* did not call to mind the scene in the *Antiquary*, where the old fisherman is found repairing the boat in which his son had just been drowned—'It's weel for you gentles that can sit with a handkercher at your een when you lose a friend—we maun to our wark again, if the heart were beating as hard as my hammer.'

The Captain is too polite not to call all pretty young fellow-travellers *ladies*, but if the heroines of the following episode were factory girls, we see no reason to doubt that similar proceedings might occur between two sisters of the spindle in a Manchester omnibus:—

'Progressing in the stage, I had a very amusing specimen of the ruling passion of the country—the spirit of barter, which is communicated to the females, as well as to the boys. I will stop for a moment, however, to say, that I heard of an American, who had two sons, and he declared that they were so clever at barter, that he locked them both up together in a room, without a cent in their pockets, and that before they had *swopped* for an hour, they had gained two dollars apiece. But now for my fellow-passengers—both young, both good-looking, and both ladies, and evidently total strangers to each other. One had a pretty pink silk bonnet, very fine for travelling; the other, an indifferent plush one. The young lady in the plush eyed the pink bonnet for some time: at last *Push* observed, in a drawing half-indifferent way, "That's rather a pretty bonnet of your's, miss."—"Why, yes, I calculate it's rather smart," replied *Pink*. After a pause and closer survey, "You wouldn't have any objection to part with it, miss?"—"Well, now, I don't know but I might; I have worn it but three days, I reckon."—"Oh, my! I should have reckoned that you carried it longer; perhaps it rained on them three days."—"I've a notion it didn't rain, not one. It's not the only bonnet I have, miss."—"Well, now, I should not mind an exchange, and paying you the *balance*."—"That's an awful thing that you have on, miss."—"I rather think not, but that's as may be. Come, miss, what will you take?"—"Why, I don't know; what will you give?"—"I reckon you'll know best when you answer my question."—"Well, then, I shouldn't like less than five dollars."—

"Five dollars and my bonnet! I reckon two would be nearer the mark; but it's of no consequence."—"None in the least, miss, only I know the value of my bonnet. We'll say no more about it."—"Just so, miss." A pause and silence for half a minute, when Miss Plush looks out of the window, and says, as if talking to herself, "I shouldn't mind giving four dollars, but no more." She then fell back in her seat, when Miss Pink put her head out of the window, and said, "I shouldn't refuse four dollars after all, if it was offered;" and then she fell back to her former position. "Did you think of taking four dollars, miss?"—"Well! I don't care, I've plenty of bonnets at home."—"Well," replied Plush, taking out her purse, and offering her the money.—"What bank is this, miss?"—"Oh, all's right there, Safety Fund, I calculate." The two ladies exchange bonnets, and Pink pockets the balance.—vol. i., pp. 232-235.

The *pendant* is hit off in his best style—

'I may here just as well mention the custom of *whittling*, which is so common in the Eastern States. It is a habit, arising from the natural restlessness of the American when he is not employed, of cutting a piece of stick, or anything else, with his knife. Some are so wedded to it from long custom, that if they have not a piece of stick to cut, they will whittle the backs of the chairs, or any thing within their reach. A yankee shown into a room to await the arrival of another has been known to whittle away nearly the whole of the mantle-piece. Lawyers in court whittle away at the table before them; and judges will cut through their own bench. In some courts they put sticks before noted whittlers to save the furniture. The Down-Easters, as the yankees are termed generally, whittle when they are making a bargain, as it fills up the pauses, gives them time for reflection, and moreover prevents any examination of the countenance—for in bargaining, like the game of brag, the countenance is carefully watched, as an index to the wishes. I was once witness to a bargain made between two respectable yankees, who wished to agree about a farm, and in which whittling was resorted to.

'They sat down on a log of wood, about three or four feet apart from each other, with their faces turned opposite ways—that is, one had his legs on one side of the log with his face to the East, and the other his legs on the other side with his face to the West. One had a piece of soft wood, and was sawing it with his penknife; the other had an unbarked hiccory stick which he was peeling for a walking-stick. The reader will perceive a strong analogy between this bargain and that in the stage between the two ladies.

"Well, good morning—and about this farm?"—"I don't know; what will you take?"—"What will you give?"—Silence, and whittle away.

"Well, I should think two thousand dollars a heap of money for this farm."—"I've a notion it will never go for three thousand, any how."—"There's a fine farm, and cheaper, on the North side."—"But where's the sun to ripen the corn?"—"Sun shines on all alike."—"Not exactly

exactly through a Vermont hill, I reckon. The driver offered me as much as I say, if I recollect right—"Money not always forthcoming."—"I reckon I shall make an elegant 'backy-stopper of this piece of sycamore."

'Silence for a few moments. Knives hard at work.'

"I've a notion this is as pretty a hickory stick as ever came out of a wood."—"I shouldn't mind two thousand five hundred dollars, and time given."—"It couldn't be more than six months then, if it goes at that price."

'(Pause.)'

"Well, that might suit me."—"What do you say, then?"—"Suppose it must be so."—"It's a bargain then (*rising up*): come let's liquor on it."

N.B. Napoleon Buonaparte was as determined a whittler as the late President of the United States, who was thus eulogised in another stage-progress to Captain Marryat:—"Well, I reckon that from his teeth to his toe-nail there's not a human of a more conquering natur than Giniril Jackson."

A very disagreeable subject is touched upon at vol. iii., p. 176—

'The Americans were constantly twitting me about the occasional cases of adultery and divorce which appear in our newspapers, assuring me, at the same time, that there was hardly ever such a thing heard of in their own moral community. Now, it appears that this subject has not only been taken up by the clergy, (for Dr. Dwight, late president of Yale College, preached a sermon on the seventh commandment, which an American author asserts "was heard with pain and confusion of face, and which never can be read in a promiscuous circle without exciting the same feelings,") but by one of their societies also; and, although they have not assumed the name of the *Patent Anti-Adultery Society*, they are positively doing the work of such a one, and the details are entered into in promiscuous assemblies without the least reservation. The author before mentioned says—"The common feeling on the subject has been declared false delicacy; and, in order to break ground against its sway, females have been forced into the van of this enterprize, and persuaded to act as agents, not only among their own sex, but in circumstances where they must necessarily agitate the subject with men,—not wives with husbands, which would be bad enough, but *young and single women with young and single men!*"'

We beg to inform Captain Marryat that we received within these few weeks a most *sentimental* circular from a Society of exactly the same class, in a certain district of this metropolis, and that among the office-bearers there are both single men and single women—whether old or young we cannot exactly say. Similar Associations exist also, unless we be misinformed, in many of our provincial towns, and we remember to have read that when the horrible Westport murders came to light, several amiable spinsters of Edinburgh were found to have very narrowly escaped

escaped *burking* in the course of their benevolent explorings of the lowest haunts of vice!

Captain Marryat says:—

‘Those who live under a democracy have but one pursuit, but one object to gain, which is wealth. No one can serve God and Mammon. To suppose that a man who has been in such ardent pursuit of wealth, as is the American for six days in the week, can recall his attention and thoughts to serious points on the seventh, is absurd; you might as well expect him to forget his tobacco on Sunday.

‘Under a democracy, therefore, you must look for religion among the women, not among the men, and such is found to be the case in the United States. As Sam Slick very truly says, “It’s only women who attend meeting; the men folks have their politics and trade to talk over—and havn’t time.”’—vol. iii., p. 143.

We must observe here that the quotation from Mr. Slick introduces another enemy to the meeting as well as Mammon; and also that what Marryat describes as a result of democratic government ought, for anything he states, to be exemplified equally among the purely commercial classes of our own towns. Nevertheless the two British cities that have of late years exhibited the most praiseworthy example, in every circumstance that can be supposed to indicate genuine religious zeal, are Liverpool and Glasgow. We agree with the Captain, that there is much shrewdness in a remark he quotes from the author of *Mammon*—viz., ‘The only vice we can practice in this world without being arraigned for it, and at the same time go through the forms of religion, is *covetousness* ;’ but covetousness is not a large subscriber to new churches. The truth, however, is, that whatever Marryat says about the irreligious effect of extreme devotion to money-making, applies equally well to any other variety of secular ambition. The love of power or of fame is quite as perilous in that view as the love of gold. The institution of the Sabbath is the blessed antidote of worldly care as well as of mere physical labour—medicine for soul and body to rich and poor.

Our captain has many sagacious remarks on the state of religion in America—but we are not sure that any of his facts would be new to the readers of this journal. He indeed does us the honour to sum up his chapter on “the voluntary principle,” by quoting our old query—‘whether, because the hungry man is the most clamorous for dinner, it follows that the bad man will be the most eager for the means of moral and religious instruction?’ Nothing more correct, probably, than what he says about the miserable tyranny to which the American clergymen, of all sects but one or two, are habitually subjected by the laity of their congregations—but the same thing goes on throughout almost

almost all the dissenting persuasions here in England; and in Scotland—we wonder he did not advert to the portentous fact—a large proportion, perhaps a majority, of the established clergy themselves, are at this moment backing the laity of the lower orders in an agitation, which has for its avowed object to rob the Church of all authority in the most important of all matters that lie within her just department. In that country, ever since the present establishment was arranged, no man could be forced upon a parish as minister, if the parishioners could prove anything against his personal character. To judge of his learning and abilities was the province of the Ecclesiastical Court that granted holy orders—and at any stage of his progress he could be effectually arrested by a grounded charge of indecorum or levity in conduct or manners. But now, though no patron ever could present to a living any man who had not passed through repeated ordeals of ecclesiastical examination as to fitness for every variety of clerical duty, the attempt is made to beat down the law of the land, and erect it into a principle that no man shall be allowed to take possession of a living unless, besides having been duly ordained, and received the nomination of the patron, he is also so fortunate as to have captivated the individual tastes of a majority of the people in the destined parish. If this point be conceded, the degradation of the kirk will soon reach the *ne plus ultra*. There is an end to all hopes of advancement in the clerical profession, except through the pertinacious use of *soft sauder*. No man of sense and spirit will dream of dedicating a son to such a calling—and they that embrace it will be a race of crouching flatterers. The probability is that the innovation would soon break the establishment to pieces—the landed gentry would as a body abandon it; and indeed many of *them* are understood to be already quiescent on the subject, from the conviction that, after floundering through a succession of filthy experiments, the end must be the re-establishment of *episcopacy*.

Matches, such as we call *Lucifers*, are in America *Loco-focos*; and a radical mob at New York having on some occasion plundered a store of such matches, the name was applied to the *illuminati*. It seems now to be adopted universally throughout the Union. Captain Marryat says:—

‘It would appear as if Loco-foco-ism and infidelity had formed an union, and were fighting under the same banner. They have recently celebrated the birth-day of Tom Paine, in Cincinnati, New York, and Boston. In Cincinnati, Frances Wright Darusmont, better known as Fanny Wright, was present, and made a violent politico-atheistical speech on the occasion, in which she denounced banking, and almost every other established institution of the country. The nature of the celebration

celebration in Boston will be understood from the following toast given on the occasion by George Chapman:—"Christianity and the banks tottering on their last legs.—May their downfall be speedy!" &c. &c.

'Miss Martineau informs us that "The churches of Boston, and even the other public buildings, being guarded by the dragon of bigotry, so that even Faith, Hope, and Charity, are turned back from the doors, a large building is about to be erected for the use of all, Deists not excepted, who may desire to meet for free discussion." She adds, "*This at least is an advance!*" And in a few pages further—"The eagerness in pursuit of speculative truth is shown by the rapid sale of every heretical work. The clergy complain of the enormous spread of bold books, from the infidel tract to the latest handling of the miracle question, as sorrowfully as the most liberal members of society lament the unlimited circulation of the false morals issued by certain Religious Tract Societies. Both testify to the interest taken by the public in religion. The love of truth is also shown by the outbreak of heresy in all directions!"'

In America, as elsewhere, the papal power is far from neglecting to profit by the general movement of disorganization. 'The Roman Catholic Church,' says Marryat, 'is silently but surely advancing.'

'Judge Haliburton asserts, that all America will be a Catholic country. That all America west of the Alleghanies will eventually be a Catholic country, I have no doubt, as the Catholics are already in the majority, and there is nothing, as Mr. Cooper observes, to prevent any State from establishing that, or any other religion, as the *Religion of the State*;* and this is one of the dark clouds which hang over the destiny of the western hemisphere.

'The Rev. Mr. Reid says:—"It should really seem that the Pope, in the fear of expulsion from Europe, is anxious to find a reversion in this new world. The crowned heads of the continent, having the same enmity to free political institutions which his holiness has to free religious institutions, willingly unite in the attempt to enthrall this people. They have heard of the necessities of the West; they have the foresight to see that the West will become the heart of the country, and ultimately determine the character of the whole; and they have resolved to establish themselves there. Large, yea, princely, grants have been made from the Leopold society, and other sources, chiefly, though by no means exclusively, in favour of this portion of the empire that is to be. These sums are expended in erecting showy churches and colleges, and in sustaining priests and emissaries. Everything is done to captivate, and to liberalize in appearance a system essentially despotic. The sagacity of the effort is discovered, in avoiding to attack and shock the prejudices of the adult, that they may direct the educa-

* "There is nothing in the constitution of the United States to prevent all the States, or any particular State, from possessing an established religion."—Cooper's *Democrat*.

tion of the young. They look to the future; and they really have great advantages in doing so. They send out teachers excellently qualified; superior, certainly, to the run of native teachers.* Some value the European modes of education as the more excellent, others value them as the mark of fashion; the demand for instruction, too, is always beyond the supply, so that they find little difficulty in obtaining the charge of Protestant children. This, in my judgment, is the point of policy which should be especially regarded with jealousy; but the actual alarm has arisen from the disclosure of a correspondence which avows designs on the West, beyond what I have here set down. It is a curious affair, and is one other evidence, if evidence were needed, that popery and jesuitism are one."

'I think,' adds Marryat, 'that the author of Sam Slick may not be wrong in his assertion, that *all* America will be a Catholic country. I myself never prophesy; but I cannot help remarking, that even in the most anti-Catholic persuasions in America there is a strong Papistical feeling; that is, there is a vying with each other, not only to obtain the best preachers, but to have the best organs and the best singers. It is the system of excitement which, without their being aware of it, they carry into their devotion. It proves that, to them, there is a weariness in the church service, a tedium in prayer, which requires to be relieved by the stimulus of good music and sweet voices. Indeed, what with their *anxious seats*, their *revivals*, their *music*, and their *singing*, every class and sect in the States have even now so far fallen into Catholicism, that religion has become more of an appeal to the *senses* than to the *judgment*.'—vol. iii., pp. 163-166.

In the *political* chapters of this book the subject treated with most novelty is, we think, that of the spread of *Societies*, such as the Abolition, the Temperance, &c. &c., some of which count members by millions, and are already exerting, or preparing to exert, a potent and direct influence over all elections—an influence so vast, that it seems quite feasible for a couple of them to combine with the effect of carrying even the Presidency. We must quote a little of what the Captain says about the *tee-totallers*.

'The legislature of Massachusetts, which State is the stronghold of the Society, passed an act last year, by which it prohibited the selling of spirits in a smaller quantity than fifteen gallons, intending thereby to do away with the means of dram-drinking at the groceries, as they are termed; a clause, however, permitted apothecaries to retail smaller quantities, and the consequence was that all the grog-shops commenced taking out apothecaries' licences. That being stopped, the *striped pig* was resorted to: that is to say, a man charged people the value of a glass of liquor to see a *striped pig*, which peculiarity was exhibited as a sight, and, when in the house, the visitors were offered a glass of

* 'The Catholic priests who instruct are to my knowledge the best educated men in the States. It was a pleasure to be in their company.'—Marryat's note.

spirits for nothing. But this act of the legislature has given great offence, and the State of Massachusetts is now divided into two very strange political parties, to wit, the *topers* and the *tee-totallers*!

'An old Dutchman, who kept an inn at Hoboken, had long resisted the attacks of the temperance societies, until one night he happened to get so very drunk, that he actually signed the paper and took the oath. The next morning he was made acquainted with what he had unconsciously done, and, much to the surprise of his friends, he replied, "Well, if I have signed and have sworn, as you tell me I have, I must keep to my word," and from that hour the old fellow abstained altogether from his favourite schnapps. But the leaving off a habit which had become necessary had the usual result. The old man took to his bed, and at last became seriously ill. A medical man was called in, and, when he was informed of what had occurred, perceived the necessity of some stimulus, and ordered that his patient should take one ounce of French brandy every day. 'An ounce of French brandy,' said the old Dutchman, looking at the prescription. "Well, dad is goot; but how much is an ounce?" Nobody who was present could inform him. "I know what a quart, a pint, or a gill of brandy is," said the Dutchman; "but I never yet have had a customer call for an ounce. Well, my son, go to the schoolmaster; he is a learned man, and tell him I wish to know how much is one ounce." The message was carried. The schoolmaster, occupied with his pupils, and not liking the interruption, hastily, and without further inquiries of the messenger, turned over his Bonnycastle, and arriving at the table of avoirdupois weight, replied, "Tell your father that *sixteen drams* make an ounce."—The boy took back the message correctly, and when the old Dutchman heard it his countenance brightened up: "A goot physician, a clever man—I only have drink twelve drams a day, and he tells me to take sixteen. I have taken one oath when I was drunk, and I keep it; now dat I am sober I take anoder, which is, I will be very sick for de remainder of my days, and never throw my physic out of wiindow."

'There was a *cold water* celebration at Boston, on which occasion the hilarity of the evening was increased by the singing of the following

O

'In Eden's green retreats
A water-brook that play'd
Between soft, mossy seats
Beneath a plane-tree's shade,
Whose rustling leaves
Danced o'er its brink,
Was Adam's drink,
And also Eve's.

Beside the parent spring
Of that young brook, the pair
Their morning chant would sing;
And Eve, to dress her hair,
Kneel on the grass
That fringed its side,
And make its tide
Her looking glass.

And when the man of God
From Egypt led his flock,
They thirsted, and his rod
Smote the Arabian rock,
And forth a rill
Of water gush'd,
And on they rush'd,
And drank their fill.

Would Eden thus have smiled
Had *some* to Eden come?
Would Heret's parching wild
Have been refreshed with *rum*?
And had Eve's hair
Been dress'd in *gin*,
Would she have been
Reflected fair?

Had

Had Moses built a still,
And dealt out to that host,
To every man his gill,
And pledged him in a toast,
How large a band
Of Israel's sons
Had laid their bones
In Canaan's land?

"Sweet fields, beyond Death's door,
"Stand dress'd in living green,"
For, from the throne of God,
To freshen all the scene,

A river rolls,
Where all who will
May come and fill
Their crystal bowls.

If Eden's strength and bloom
Cold water thus hath given—
If, e'en beyond the tomb,
It is the drink of heaven—
Are not good wells,
And crystal springs,
The very things
For our hotels?

—vol. iii. pp. 186-190.

The Captain's chapter on the town of Buffalo, that wonderful child of the Erie Canal (which there joins the Great Lake with the Hudson River) is full of shrewd observations. He says—

'It is hardly to be credited that such a beautiful city could have risen up in the wilderness in so short a period. In the year 1814 it was burnt down, being then only a village; only one house was left standing, and now it is a city with twenty-five thousand inhabitants. All the houses in the principal streets are lofty and substantial, and are either of brick or granite. The main street is wider, and the stores handsomer, than the majority of those in New York. It has five or six very fine churches, a handsome theatre, town-hall, and market, and three or four hotels, one of which is superior to most others in America; and to these we must add a fine stone pier, with a lighthouse, and a harbour full of shipping and magnificent steam-boats..

'In speaking of the new towns rising so fast in America, I wish the reader to understand, that if he compares them with the country towns of the same population in England, he will not do them justice. In the smaller towns of England you can procure but little, and you have to send to London for anything good: in the larger towns, such as Norwich, &c., you may procure most things; but still luxuries must usually be obtained from the metropolis. But in such places as Buffalo and Cleveland, everything is to be had that you can procure at New York or Boston. In those two towns on Lake Erie are stores better furnished, and handsomer, than any shops at Norwich, in England; and you will find in either of them articles for which at Norwich you would be obliged to send to London. It is the same thing at almost every town in America with which communication is easy. Would you furnish a house in one of them, you will find every article of furniture,—carpets, stoves, grates, marble chimney-pieces, pier-glasses, pianos, lamps, candelabra, glass, china, &c., in twice the quantity, and in greater variety, than at any provincial town in England.

'This arises from the system of credit extended through every vein and artery of the country, and by which English goods are forced, as if with a force-pump, into every available depôt in the Union; and thus, in a town so newly raised that the stumps of the forest-trees are not only still surrounding the houses but remain standing in the cellars, you will find every luxury that can be required. It may be asked what becomes

becomes of all these goods. It must be recollected that hundreds of new houses spring up every year in the towns, and that the surrounding country is populous and wealthy. In the farm-houses (mean-looking and often built of logs) is to be found not only comfort, but very often luxury.'—vol. i. pp. 176-8.

The history of the individual to whom Buffalo chiefly owes its splendour might have furnished ~~Glabbe~~ with a subject:—

'The person who was the cause of this unusual rise was a Mr. Rathbun, who now lies incarcerated in a gaol of his own building. It was he who built all the hotels, churches, and other public edifices; in fact every structure worthy of observation in the whole town was projected, contracted for, and executed by Mr. Rathbun. His history is singular. Of quiet, unassuming manners, Quaker in his dress, moderate in all his expenses (except in charity, wherein, assisted by an amiable wife, he was very liberal), he concealed under this apparent simplicity and goodness a mind capable of the vastest conceptions, united with the greatest powers of execution. He undertook contracts, and embarked in building speculations, to an amount almost incredible. Rathbun undertook everything, and everything undertaken by Rathbun was well done. Not only at Buffalo but at Niagara, and other places, he was engaged in raising vast buildings, when the great crash occurred, and Rathbun, with others, was unable to meet his liabilities. Then, for the first time, it was discovered that for more than five years he had been conniving at a system of forgery, to the amount of two millions of dollars: the forgery consisted in putting to his bills the names of responsible parties as indorsers, that they might be more current. It does not appear that he ever intended to defraud, for he took up all his notes as fast as they became due; and it was this extreme regularity on his part which prevented the discovery of his fraud for so unusually long a period.'—vol. i. pp. 170-2.

From Buffalo he steps over into Upper Canada, and writes thus from the capital, which *was* York and is Toronto:—

'The minute you put your foot on shore, you feel that you are no longer in the United States: you are at once struck with the difference between the English and the American population, systems, and ideas. On the other side of the lake you have much more apparent property, but much less real solidity and security. The houses and stores at Toronto are not to be compared with those of the American towns opposite: but the Englishman has built according to his means; the American, according to his expectations. The hotels and inns at Toronto are very bad; at Buffalo they are splendid: for the Englishman travels little; the American is ever on the move. The private houses of Toronto are built, according to the English taste and desire of exclusiveness, away from the road, and are embowered in trees; the American, let his house be ever so large, or his plot of ground however extensive, builds within a few feet of the road, that he may see and know what is going on. You do not perceive the bustle, the energy, and

and activity at Toronto that you do at Buffalo, nor the profusion of articles in the stores; but it should be remembered that the Americans procure their articles upon credit, whilst at Toronto they proceed more cautiously. The Englishman builds his house and furnishes his store according to his means and fair expectations of being able to meet his acceptances. If an American has money sufficient to build a two-story house, he will raise it up to four stories on speculation. We must not, on one side, be dazzled with the effects of the credit system in America, nor yet be too hasty in condemning it. It certainly is the occasion of much over-speculation; but if the parties who speculate are ruined, provided the money has been laid out, as it usually is in America, upon real property, such as wharfs, houses, &c., a new country becomes a gainer, as the improvements are made and remain, although they fall into other hands. And it should be further pointed out, that the Americans are justified in their speculations from the fact, that property improved rises so fast in value that they are soon able to meet all claims and realise a handsome profit: they speculate on the future; but the future with them is not distant as it is with us, ten years in America being equal to a century in Europe: they are, therefore, warranted in so speculating. The property in Buffalo is now worth one hundred times what it was when the first speculators commenced; for as the country and cities become peopled, and the communication becomes easy, so does the value of everything increase.—*Marryat*, vol. i. pp. 213-16.

Captain Marryat's *Diary* does not quite fill two of these volumes, the remainder being given to chapters in which he discusses and speculates. We are of opinion that he would have done better had he intermingled these disquisitions of his with the lively and humorous narrative; and in our arrangement of extracts we have taken the liberty of neglecting the order of the book. There are in the third volume, however, several essays,—on the state of the law, religion, education, slavery, and especially one on the state of the American navy, which we must recommend to the deliberate attention of our readers. These must be read continuously, or no justice will be done either to the subjects or to the author. At present we can only advert to one or two practical hints.

The Captain is as much horrified as any of his precursors with the barbarous condition of society in the frontier States of the Union—and especially with the scenes too often enacted under the authority of what they call *Lynch-law*—but he reclaims against the severity with which all persons taking a part in such scenes have been condemned by hasty observers. He appears to us to have proved distinctly that the Lynch system grew up, and has continued to be tolerated, simply because the short-sighted stinginess of the republican exchequer, in starving all legal functionaries and establishments over these newly-settled districts, has

has rendered the regular administration of justice a mere impotent farce. Innkeepers, or persons equally dependent on local patronage, are, from the shabbiest of considerations, promoted to the highest legal offices; and where such men are attorney-generals and judges, the crimes of wealthy desperadoes, or well-combined bodies of miscreants, are practically beyond the reach of law.

‘The whole of Ireland would offer nothing equal in atrocity to what I can prove relative to one small town in America; that of Augusta, in Georgia, containing only a population of 3000, in which in one year there were *fifty-nine assassinations* committed in open day, without any notice being taken of them by the authorities.’—vol. iii. p. 224.

Society, even in its infancy, rebels against such gross denegation of justice, and notorious offenders are every now and then punished with stripes, banishment, even death, at the hands of the outraged population. Nothing can be more shocking than the excess to which this is occasionally carried; but if the administration of justice be virtually abandoned to the mass, the blame and the guilt lie essentially upon the supreme government of the country.

Captain Marryat gives some curious details respecting the origin of that audacious aggression, the seizure of the Mexican province of Texas by citizens of the United States, unrebuked, if not privately prompted, by the government at Washington. He quotes a long array of native authorities, among others that of Dr. Channing, for the fact that this was a deliberate scheme for extending the slave-holding interest in opposition to the gigantic efforts of the abolition societies. Texas, though situated so far to the south, being an open prairie country, enjoying perpetually the free breezes of the Atlantic, admits every field operation to be conducted safely and in comfort by white labourers. Mexico abolished and prohibited slavery, and the American planters of the southern States, resenting this example, and dreading the competition of free-labour cotton, formed a league to commit what Miss Martineau justly calls ‘the most high-handed theft of modern times,’ for the express purpose of nullifying the prohibition, and converting the Texas into a vast new market for slaves, a vast new field for slave labour—and of drawing from thence a vast accession of political power to the slave-holding provinces of the Union.

‘The project of dismembering a neighbouring republic, that slave-holders and slaves might overspread a region which had been consecrated to a free population, was discussed in newspapers as freely as if it were a matter of obvious right and unquestionable humanity. A powerful interest was thus created for severing from Mexico her distant province.’

So

So says Channing—Captain Marryat adds:—

'America (for the government looked on and offered no interruption) has seized upon Texas with a view of extending the curse of slavery, and of finding a mart for the excess of her negro population: if Texas is admitted into the Union, all chance of the abolition of slavery must be thrown forward to such an indefinite period, as to be lost in the mist of futurity: if, on the contrary, Texas remains an independent province, or is restored to her legitimate owners, and in either case slavery is abolished, she then becomes, from the very circumstance of her fertility and aptitude for white labour, not only the great *check to slavery*, but eventually the means of its *abolition*. Never, therefore, was there a portion of the globe upon which the moral world must look with such interest. England may, if she acts promptly and wisely, make such terms with this young State as to raise it up as a barrier against the profligate ambition of America.'—vol. iii., pp. 76-78.

Captain Marryat gives little of his space to the *Red men*, and we are not aware that he has brought out more than a single new trait of their manners. It is a curious one certainly—he is speaking of the Sioux:—

'They hold what they term *Virgin Feasts*, and when these are held, should any young woman accept the invitation who has by her misconduct rendered herself unqualified for it, it is the duty of any man who is aware of her unfitness, to go into the circle and lead her out. A circumstance of this kind occurred the other day, when the daughter of a celebrated chief gave a *Virgin Feast*: a young man of the tribe walked into the circle and led her out; upon which the chief led his daughter to the lodge of the young Sioux, and told him that he gave her to him for his wife, but the young man refused to take her, as being unworthy. But what is more singular (and I have it from authority which is unquestionable), they also hold *Virgin Feasts* for the young men; and should any young man take his seat there who is unqualified, the woman who is aware of it must lead him out, although in so doing she convicts herself: nevertheless, it is considered a sacred duty and *is done*.'—vol. ii., pp. 96-97.

Not always, *perhaps*—but we recommend the subject to the romantic bards of our 'Keepsakes,' 'Forget-me-nots,' and 'Books of Beauty.'

We regret that we cannot find room for more than one extract from Mr. Murray's *Indian* chapters, for on this interesting subject he is much more communicative than Captain Marryat. The brilliant narrative of Washington Irving's '*Astoria*' had, no doubt, pre-occupied the richest ground—but still the pages in which Mr. Murray describes his own adventures among the red men of 'the far West' will amply reward our readers' attention. It is impossible to peruse them without conceiving a very favourable opinion of the writer's personal character, spirit, and temper.

He

He seems to have submitted to all sorts of privations and hardships with the same gallantry of heart that never failed on the threatening of actual danger; and he can therefore afford well to paint *con amore* the dandy hair-apparent of the great chief of the Paw-

‘He began his toilet about eight in the morning, by greasing and smoothing his whole person with fat, which he rubbed afterwards perfectly dry, only leaving the skiff sleek and glossy; he then painted his face vermillion, with a stripe of red also along the centre of the crown of the head; he then proceeded to his ‘coiffure,’ which received great attention, although the quantum of hair demanding such care was limited, inasmuch as his head was shaved close, except one tuft at the top, from which hung two plaited “tresses.” (Why must I call them “pigtales?”) He then filled his ears, which were bored in two or three places, with rings and wampum, and hung several strings of beads round his neck; then, sometimes painting stripes of vermillion and yellow upon his breast and shoulders, and placing armlets above his elbows and rings upon his fingers, he proceeded to adorn the nether man with a pair of mocassins, some scarlet cloth leggings fastened to his waist-belt, and bound round below the knees with garters of beads four inches broad. Being so prepared, he drew out his mirror, fitted into a small wooden frame, (which he always, whether hunting or at home, carried about his person,) and commenced a course of self-examination, such as the severest disciple of Watts, Mason, or any other religious moralist, never equalled. Nay more, if I were not afraid of offending the softer sex by venturing to bring man into comparison with them in an occupation which is considered so peculiarly their own, I would assert that no female creation of the poets, from the time that Eve first saw “that smooth watery image,” till the polished toilet of the lovely Belinda, ever studied her own reflected self with more perseverance or satisfaction than this Pawnee youth. I have repeatedly seen him sit, for above an hour at a time, examining his face in every possible position and expression; now frowning like Homer’s Jove before a thunder-storm, now like the same god, described by Milton, “smiling with superior love;” now slightly varying the streaks of paint upon his cheeks and forehead, and then pushing or pulling “each particular hair” of his eyebrows into its most becoming place! Could the youth have seen anything in that mirror half so dangerous as the features which the glassy wave gave back to the gaze of the fond Narcissus, I might have feared for his life or reason; but, fortunately for these, they had only to contend with a low receding forehead, a nose somewhat *simious*, a pair of small sharp eyes, with high cheek-bones, and a broad mouth, well furnished with a set of teeth, which had at least the merit of demolishing speedily everything, animal or vegetable, that came within their range.

‘His toilet thus arranged to his satisfaction, one of the women or children led his buffalo-horse before the tent; and he proceeded to deck his steed, by painting his forehead, neck, and shoulders with stripes of vermillion, and sometimes twisted a few feathers into his tail. He then
put

put into his mouth an old-fashioned bridle, bought or stolen from the Spaniards, from the bit of which hung six or eight steel chains, about nine inches long; while some small bells, attached to the reins, contributed to render the movements of the steed as musical as those of the lovely 'Sonnante,' in the incomparable tale of Comte Hamilton.

'All things being now ready for the promenade, he threw a scarlet mantle over his shoulders, thrust his mirror in below his belt, took in one hand a large fan, of wild-goose or turkey feathers, to shield his fair and delicate complexion from the sun, while a whip hung from his wrist, having the handle studded with brass nails. Thus accoutred, he mounted his jingling palfrey, and ambled through the encampment, envied by all the youths less gay in attire, attracting the gaze of the unfortunate drudges who represent the gentler sex, and admired supremely by himself!'—*Murray*, vol. i., pp. 318-321.

In a foot-note upon the italicized adjective *simious* our author adds:—

'I believe I can justly claim the invention or anglicising of this word. If I can, I consider the republic of letters under deep obligation to me.'

We are sorry to undeceive Mr. Murray, but his exultation is *nimious*;—if he will turn to Peter Plymley's third letter, (which we are happy to refer to in the collective works of Mr. Sydney Smith, vol. iii. p. 300,) he will find Mr. Canning charged with inventing (thirty years ago) a new term, *viz.*, *fanaticism*, to denote what had used to be called 'public virtue' and 'detection of abuses;' to which Peter adds, that 'the term invented by Mr. Canning has been adopted by that *simious* parasite who is always grinning at his heels,'—meaning, according to the ancient scholiasts, Lord Palmerston.

It may be doubted if even yet the happy adjective has been quite anglicised; but, as Don Juan observes,—

'If England wants the word, she has the thing.'

ART. III.—*Memoirs of the Life, Character, and Writings of Joseph Butler, D.C.L., late Lord Bishop of Durham.* By Thomas Bartlett, A.M., Rector of Kingstone, Kent, and one of the Six Preachers of the Cathedral of Christ, Canterbury. London. 8va 1839.

ON the works of this great prelate we have expressed ourselves at large in former numbers of this Journal.* His life, now written for the first time in any detail, demands some notice, uneventful as it is,—both because it is the life of Butler, and because it proceeds from the pen of a connexion of his own:

* See particularly vol. XXXVIII., p. 305, &c.; and vol. XLIII., p. 122, &c.

Mr. Bartlett having married (if we read him right) the great-granddaughter of the bishop's elder brother. It may be presumed, therefore, that whatever tradition of their illustrious relative survives is most likely to be found in this quarter; and that if it prove scanty, as it does, it is nevertheless all that is to be had.

Joseph Butler, the author of the *Analogy* and the *Sermons*, was born at Wantage, a market-town in Berkshire, (which had the glory also of giving birth to Alfred the Great,) on the 18th May, 1692. He was the youngest of eight children of Thomas Butler, a substantial linen and woollen draper, who had retired, however, from his shop, and established himself at the Priory, a house near the town, where the room in which Butler first drew breath is yet to be seen nearly as it then was. His education was begun under the Rev. Philip Burton, a clergyman of the Church of England, and master of the grammar-school of that place. From him he was by-and-by removed to Mr. Jones, who kept a dissenting school, first at Gloucester and afterwards at Tewkesbury; Butler's father being of the Presbyterian persuasion, and intending his son for its ministry. Here he had Secker for his schoolfellow; and the friendship between the future primate of England and prelate of Durham, commenced under these singular auspices, in a nursery of nonconformity, lasted throughout life. It was whilst he was yet at Tewkesbury school, though now in his twenty-first year, that he addressed his Letters (so well known) to Dr. Clarke, wherein he professes himself dissatisfied with that author's *Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God*. The reasons which he assigns for this are so acute; are urged in so calm and ingenuous a spirit; and so clearly proceed from one whose desire really was, what he avowed it to be, 'to make the search after truth the business of his life'—that Clarke replied to them, anonymous as they were, evidently under a sense that he had to deal with an antagonist worthy of him, and eventually attached the whole correspondence to his treatise. In order to preserve his *incognito* in this affair, Secker was employed to convey these letters to the post-office at Gloucester, and bring back the replies: such was the modesty of this masterly reasoner, —a feature of his mind which impresses itself on his writings from first to last; for 'the shortness of our faculties,' to use a phrase of his own, was that which made itself most felt, as was likely, by one who exercised them on such high argument; and instead of the oracle many an ordinary man esteems himself—esteems himself in proportion as his parts are shallow—Butler's confession ever was, 'I have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep.' It was now becoming time that he should enter on his profession; but after reflecting on the question of nonconformity, he could
not

not satisfy himself of its reasonableness or innocence; and, in spite of the bias of education and a father's wish, he decided for the church. When the temperament of Butler's mind is considered, and the absence of all temptation in the church at that time to warp his choice, it must be confessed that *she* has great reason to triumph in the deliberate verdict of such a man; and it was probably not forgiven or forgotten when, some years after his death, an attempt was made to fasten on his memory an accusation of popery, partly founded on a Charge which he delivered to his clergy at Durham, in which he had ventured to plead for 'the importance of external religion,'—'of forms which should daily bring the subject before men's thoughts, and lead bad men to repent, and good men to grow better;' and partly on the fact that, when repairing his private chapel at Bristol, he had fixed a cross over the altar. It was reserved for the reformers of Bristol, eight years ago, effectually to do away all traces of the latter reproach; and when they had set the bishop's house in order, after their manner, and search was made amongst the ruins for this memorial of Butler's episcopacy, it was found to be broken in pieces and destroyed. And yet this *papist* had written, in one of his sermons, of *popery*,* that it '*was the great corruption of Christianity, which is ever hard at work to bring us again under its yoke!*' But that age, like this, knew not how to discriminate between popery—an invention of modern times, which shrinks from the test of real antiquity—and the primitive church, which was indeed full of the visible signs of invisible things, in order the better to appeal to thoughtless men; and delighted to present the cross on all occasions to their eyes, that their hearts might be turned to Him who died on it.

Butler never was married; but an acrostic epitaph upon a female cousin, written about this period of his life, gives token that he too 'had felt the softer flame.' The lines are withheld, from a natural desire of the biographer not to exhibit Butler in a position below himself; but well may that passion be thought to foster the muse, which could excite the author of the '*Analogy*' to deeds of verse.

In 1714 Butler was entered a commoner of Oriel College, where he soon formed an intimacy with Mr. Edward Talbot, son of Dr. Talbot, shortly after Bishop of Durham; an event which gave a character to the rest of his life. Through Mr. Talbot's influence, seconded by that of Dr. Clarke, then rector of St. James's, he was in 1718 appointed preacher of the Rolls Court, apparently his first regular ministerial charge; for though his autograph is found in the register of the baptisms and burials of the parish of Hendred, near Wantage, during the year 1717, it is

probable that he was merely officiating for his friend Mr. Talbot, the incumbent of the living.

Meanwhile Secker was studying medicine at Paris; for though he too, like Butler, was designed by his father for a minister amongst the dissenters, yet being unable to determine to what communion amongst them he should attach himself, and dissatisfied moreover with the divisions that prevailed amongst them all, he had resolved upon a different walk in life. But far other things were in store for him than he contemplated. Butler, without his knowing it, had spoken of him in such terms to Mr. Talbot, that the latter promised, if he thought proper to take orders in the Church of England, to recommend him to the notice of his father the bishop; and after some deliberation Secker accepted the offer, and was ordained in 1722 to the rectory of Houghton-le-Spring. Butler himself was presented the same year, by the same patron, to that of Haughton, near Darlington. We think it is Fuller who tells of an inscription over a parsonage door to this effect,—

‘If here you shall find
A house built to your mind,
Without any cost;
Praise God the more,
And give to the poor,
And then my labour is not lost.’

But Butler had not this piece of good fortune. He was accordingly upon the point of involving himself in the expenses attending the erection of a new house; a work in which he was thought very little fitted to engage; when his patron, at the suggestion of Secker, hastened to his rescue by presenting him with the rectory of Stanhope. This was in 1725. In the following year he resigned the preachingship at the Rolls, which he had hitherto held with his living, dividing his time between the duties of town and country, and resided altogether at Stanhope; not being *dead*, as Archbishop Blackburn replied to Queen Caroline, who had thought him so, but *buried*.

On quitting the Rolls, however, he published his *Sermons*, fifteen in number, preached at that chapel, taken at random, as he tells us, from amongst others delivered by him in the same place; and however deeply we may lament his modest disposal of the rest, it is characteristic of Butler that he should have left it as ‘his positive and express will,’ that ‘they should be burned without being read by any one, as soon as might be, after his decease.’ In the *Sermons* which he published, the true foundation of morals is affirmed in the principle of the supremacy of conscience; and though overlaid for a season by the principle of expediency

expediency of Paley, which had the disastrous advantage of being recommended to the world by the most popular of writers, truth is once more beginning to show how mighty it is, and Butler's assertion of it to prevail.

In the retirement of Stanhope he was 'chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancies';—of *sweet*, for he was here rearing up that everlasting memorial of his genius, *The Analogy of Religion to the Constitution and Course of Nature*—and (to adopt the majestic language of Mr. Southey) 'was laying his strong foundations in the depths of that great argument, there to construct another irrefragable proof of the truth of Christianity, thus rendering philosophy subservient to faith, and finding in outward and visible things the type and evidence of those within the veil';—of *bitter*, for the seclusion in which he was living began to try his spirits, which were at best perhaps not high, and made his friends anxious to relieve him from his solitude. Accordingly, Secker, who, though nearly of his own age, yet being probably the wiser in his generation, seems to have watched over him with a kind of parental affection, interceded with the Lord Chancellor Talbot, the brother of Mr. Edward Talbot, their common patron in early life, to nominate him his chaplain, and Butler began once more to spend half the year in town. Of his habits at Stanhope all that can be gathered on the spot, is contained in the following letter of the present Bishop of Exeter to Dr. Goddard, Arch-deacon of Lincoln:—

'Exeter, January 25, 1835.

'My dear Sir,—I earnestly wish I could justify the report made to you by the Provost of Oriel, that I could supply you with several anecdotes of Bishop Butler. The truth however is, that although tantalized by seeming opportunities of acquiring some information respecting the private life and habits of one to whom I have been accustomed to look up as the greatest of uninspired men, I have been mortified by my almost entire failure. In the rectory of Stanhope, I was successor to him after an interval of eighty years; and one of my earliest employments there, was to search for relics of my illustrious predecessor. I was assured that an old parishioner, who, with a tolerably clear memory, had reached the age of ninety-three or ninety-four, recollected him well. To him I frequently went, and in almost all my conversations endeavoured to elicit something respecting "Rector Butler." He remembered him well—but, as I ought, perhaps, to have anticipated, could tell me nothing; for what chance was there, that one who was a joiner's apprentice, of thirteen years of age, when Butler left Stanhope; could, fourscore years afterwards, tell anything about him? That he was respected and beloved by his parishioners, which was known before, was confirmed by my informant. He lived very retired, was very kind, and could not resist the importunities of common beggars, who, knowing his infirmity, pursued him so earnestly, as sometimes to drive him back

into his house, as his only escape. I confess I do not think my authority for this trait of character in Butler is quite sufficient to justify my reporting it with any confidence. There was, moreover, a tradition of his riding a black pony, and riding always very fast. I examined the parish books, not with much hope of discovering anything worth recording of him; and was unhappily as unsuccessful as I expected. His name, indeed, was subscribed to one or two acts of vestry, in a very neat and easy character; but if it was amusing, it was mortifying, to find the only trace of such a man's labours, recorded by his own hand, to be the passing a parish account, authorising the payment of five shillings to some adventurous clown who had destroyed a "foumart," or wood-marten, the marten-cat, or some other equally important matter.'

Standing once more in *oculis civium*, as he now did, Butler was not a man that could be passed by, and he was soon made Clerk of the Closet to Queen Caroline, a princess whose piety and acquirements gave her a taste for theological discussions; and Butler, who was in daily attendance upon her, had often to bear his part in them in the royal presence, with Berkeley, Clarke, Hoadley, Sherlock, and Secker—a subject for a dialogue of another Erasmus.

It was in 1736, soon after this appointment in the household, that he published the *Analogy*; and it marks the estimation in which its author was held, that a work of such a nature, so little adapted 'volitare per ora virum,' should have reached a second edition within the year. But he had by this time a public name. Men now seem to have gone up to him to seek counsel, as to an oracle of God. As an instance of this, Henry Home, Lord Kames, we are told, earnestly entreated that he might be allowed a personal interview with him, though he would have had far to travel for it, in order to the removal of certain doubts which arose in his mind, when he first turned his attention to the Evidences. But Butler, though answering the application with politeness, and endeavouring to satisfy Mr. Home's inquiries by letter, declined a meeting, alleging his own natural diffidence and reserve (again manifested in this incident), his inexperience in oral controversy, and his fear that the cause of truth would suffer from the unskilfulness of the advocate. David Hume also was anxious for an introduction to him, that he might have his opinion on his treatise on *Human Nature* before its publication; and the respect, not to say, awe, with which the sceptic contemplated the Christian philosopher, incidentally manifests itself in a passage in one of his letters to the author of *Douglas*, wherein he says, 'I am at present cutting off its nobler parts, *i. e.* endeavouring it shall give as little offence as possible, before which I could not pretend to put it into the Doctor's hands.'

This

This is a piece of cowardice, for which I blame myself, though I believe none of my friends will blame me. But though Hume called upon Butler, he did not see him; and one cannot help feeling that this was just one of those trifles in life which sometimes have consequences altogether disproportionate; and that had Butler been within, Hume might have been a believer. The prophet, however, had least honour in his own house. John, one of his nephews at Wantage, a wealthy and eccentric bachelor, fonder of mechanics than metaphysical theology, having borrowed an iron vice of a Scotch neighbour who professed much admiration of the new work and its author, proposed that, as Mr. Thompson liked the 'Analogy,' and he liked the vice, they should make an exchange—and, accordingly, the quarto presentation copy which John had received from his uncle, passed into Mr. Thompson's hands.

In 1738 Butler was appointed to the See of Bristol, and two years afterwards to the Deanery of St. Paul's, when he resigned the living of Stanhope. There is a tradition at Bristol, that he spent the whole income of his bishopric (no very great one to be sure), on an average of the twelve years he held it, in the repairs and improvements of the palace; and the examination into the damage occasioned by the late fire led to the belief that he had been greatly imposed upon by the workmen he employed. A trait of his habits here is preserved by Dean Tucker (then his domestic chaplain), in one of his tracts:—

'The late Doctor Butler, Bishop of Bristol, and afterwards of Durham, had a singular notion respecting large communities and public bodies. His custom was, when at Bristol, to walk for hours in his garden in the darkest night which the time of the year could afford, and I had frequently the honour to attend him. After walking some time, he would stop suddenly and ask the question, "What security is there against the insanity of individuals? The physicians know of none; and as to divines, we have no data, either from scripture or from reason, to go upon relative to this affair." "True, my Lord, no man has a lease of his understanding, any more than of his life; they are both in the hands of the sovereign Disposer of all things." He would then take another turn, and again stop short—"Why might not whole communities and public bodies be seized with fits of insanity, as well as individuals?" "My Lord, I have never considered the case, and can give no opinion concerning it." "Nothing but this principle, that they are liable to insanity, equally at least with private persons, can account for the major part of those transactions of which we read in history." I thought little,' adds the Dean, 'of that odd conceit of the Bishop at that juncture; but I own I could not avoid thinking of it a great deal since, and applying it to many cases.'

What an application of it would have suggested itself to Tucker, could

could he have been again walking in that self-same garden on the 31st October, 1831!

In 1747 died Archbishop Potter, and the primacy was offered to Butler, but he declined it, saying, as the tradition of his family reports it, that 'It was too late for him to try to support a falling church.' His nephew John, the same who preferred the *vice* to the *Analogy*, took a view of his own of the archbishopric also; and only conceiving it possible that his uncle could have refused it from a want of capital, proposed to advance him 20,000*l.*, or any other sum he might require to set him up; and returned to Wantage greatly dissatisfied that he still persisted in his refusal.

Three years afterwards the See of Durham became vacant, and it was the wish of the King that Butler should succeed to it; but the Minister, the Duke of Newcastle, was desirous of conferring the lieutenancy of the county, which had hitherto gone with it, upon Lord Barnard; and, though it may well be believed that such an office would have few charms for such a man as Butler, he nevertheless would not allow the ancient honours of the palatine see, whether appropriate or otherwise, to take damage through him, and would hold it unimpaired or not at all. The concession was made, and Butler was translated to Durham. His feelings on this occasion will be best seen by the following admirable letter:—

'My good Friend,

'I should have been mighty glad of the favour of a visit from you, when you were in town. I thank you for your kind congratulations, though I am not without my doubts and fears how far the occasion of them is a real subject of congratulation to me. Increase of fortune is insignificant to one who thought he had enough before; and I foresee many difficulties in the station I am coming into, and no advantage worth thinking of, except some greater power of being serviceable to others; and whether this be an advantage, entirely depends on the use one shall make of it: I pray God it may be a good one. It would be a melancholy thing, in the close of life, to have no reflections to entertain oneself with, but that one had spent the revenues of the bishopric of Durham in a sumptuous course of living, and enriched one's friends with the promotions of it, instead of having really set oneself to do good and promote worthy men; yet, this right use of fortune and power is more difficult than the generality of even good people think, and requires both a guard upon oneself, and a strength of mind to withstand solicitations, greater, I wish I may not find it, than I am master of. I pray God preserve your health, and am always,

'Dear Sir,

'Your affectionate Brother and Servant,

'JOSEPH DUNELM.'

'No sooner had Dr. Butler taken possession of his new diocese, than

than he set about repairing and improving the two episcopal residences at Durham and Auckland. He appointed three days in every week for public hospitalities; but, though munificent on these occasions, in his private habits no man was more simple and unostentatious. He distributed largely—calling for his house-steward, and bidding him give whatever money he had at hand (500*l.* it happened to be on one occasion) to a benevolent institution which was recommended to him; and subscribing his 400*l.* a year to the county hospital. In the disposal of his vast patronage he had respect to merit only; insomuch, that one of his nephews, (Jonathan) a man of superior talents too, and supposed to bear a stronger resemblance to the bishop than any other of his family, but who did not give himself, as Butler thought, sufficiently to the work, and was therefore not preferred by him, exclaimed in his wrath, ‘Methinks, my Lord, it is a misfortune to be related to you.’

Whilst attending his duties in Parliament, he resided at Hampstead, in a house formerly belonging to Sir Harry Vane, and from which he was taken to the Tower before his execution. Here, also, the Bishop’s taste for architecture displayed itself. He decorated his windows with painted glass, and the subjects being scriptural, the incident was afterwards turned to account, and he was said to have received them as a present from the pope. Most of this is now lost: some was given by a subsequent occupier of the house to Oriel College, as a relic of its great alumnus; and a few panes are still to be seen in their original position. In this retreat, which is described by one of its inmates as ‘most enchanting,’ Secker (who had been rising in the Church, *pari passu*, and was now Bishop of Oxford) and Butler dined together daily.

He had not held the See of Durham more than two years when his health began to fail, and he was ordered by his physician to Bath. Here he arrived on the 3rd June, 1752; on the 8th of the same month, his chaplain and friend, Dr. Forster, writes to Secker, that his symptoms were ‘thirst, sickness, dry skin, great feverish heats, chiefly at night, attended with weakness of body, and lowness of spirits at intervals that is quite shocking.’ On the 12th, ‘his attention to every one and everything was immediately lost and gone;’ but his affection for Secker was still lively as ever, the image of the latter still mingling with his wandering thoughts; and, at the last, says his chaplain, ‘when for a day or two before his death he had in a great measure been deprived of the use of his faculties, he was perpetually talking about writing to him, though without seeming to have anything which, at least, he was at all capable of communicating.’ On the 13th June, Catherine Talbot, the daughter of Butler’s early friend, dating from the deanery

deanery of St. Paul's, where she was residing with Secker, expresses herself as follows:—

'The dangerous illness of one of our most dear and valued friends, the excellent Bishop of Durham, gives to every day a most painful anxiety for the coming in of the post from Bath. He was my father's friend. I could almost say my remembrance of him goes back some years before I was born, from the lively imagery which the conversations I used to hear in my earliest years have imprinted on my mind. But from the first of my real remembrance, I have ever known in him the kind affectionate friend, the faithful adviser, which he would condescend to when I was quite a child; and the most delightful companion, from a delicacy of thinking, an extreme politeness, a vast knowledge of the world, and a something peculiar to be met with in nobody else. And all this in a man whose sanctity of manners, and sublimity of genius, gave him one of the first ranks among men, long before he was raised to that rank in the world, which must still, if what I painfully fear should happen, aggravate such a loss, as one cannot but infinitely regret the good which such a mind in such a station must have done. But this is an idle, a wrong regret. Providence needs not this or that instrument, but whatever Providence orders is best. But you will not wonder that I am affected, that I am very low, because I see mamma low, I see my lord affected. We all live in suspense; and there is not a room in the house that does not peculiarly remind us of him who was so lately its possessor, and who has so often so cheerfully and hospitably received us in it.'

On the 16th June, about eleven o'clock in the morning, in the sixty-first year of his age, Butler breathed his last.

It is stated, says Mr. Bartlett, upon the authority of the late Rev. Richard Cecil, that during Bishop Butler's last illness, when Dr. Forster was one day reading to him the 3rd chapter of St. John's Gospel, the bishop stopped him at the 16th verse, and requested him to read it a second time. When this was done, after a pause, he said, 'I never before felt those words to be so satisfactory and consolatory.' One of the daughters of Mr. Venn, of Yelling, recollects her father often to have referred to the end of Butler—'How he looked to Christ as a poor sinner, and said he never had so clear a view of his own inability to save himself as then.' The author of the chapter in the Analogy on the appointment of a Mediator, and the redemption of the world by him, could scarcely have felt otherwise; especially under the strong conviction which he seems ever to have entertained of the degree in which he himself personally had fallen short. 'He was walking with his chaplain, Dr. Forster,' (the anecdote is Dr. Madan's, Bishop of Peterborough,) 'when he suddenly turned towards him,' (a way which he appears to have had,) 'and with much earnestness said, "I was thinking, Doctor, what an awful thing it is for a human being to stand before the great Moral

Moral Governor of the world, to give an account of all his actions in this life!" And it was Butler who had these alarms!

To the few particulars of his character, so tenderly touched in Miss Talbot's letter, we have nothing to add, except that he was extremely fond of music; and 'when he was not engaged in the evening with his friends and clergy, or in the necessary duties of his sacred office, his under-secretary, Mr. Emm, who had been a chorister at St. Paul's, was in the habit of playing to him on his organ, and this he found to be a grateful relief to his mind after severe application to study.'

An engraving, from apparently an excellent portrait of Butler, by Vanderbank, taken of him when he was forty years of age, the period at which he was employed on his *Analogy*, is prefixed to this volume. It represents him as having an oval face, regular features, an expanded forehead, strong eyebrows, and large full eyes, wearing, in a very remarkable degree, an expression of abstraction, as though the mind was otherwise engaged than in looking through them: •

‘ —fa semblante

D' uomo cui altra cura stringa e morda

Che quella di colui che gli è davante.'

There is added to this volume an abridgement of the *Analogy*, chiefly made in Butler's own words; and an apocryphal sermon on St. John iii. 8, on which, as we have no others of the like kind to compare it with, we will not pronounce an opinion.

On the whole we are most grateful to Mr. Bartlett for the information he has afforded us on this deeply interesting subject, from the family recollections he has gleaned up, and from the various notices of Butler by contemporary writers, which he has drawn to a focus and made tributary to his *Memoirs*. In a future edition, which we heartily hope may be speedily called for—since nothing but good can come of every fresh impulse given to the circulation of his great relation's works—we would suggest to him, whether his materials might not sometimes be re-arranged to advantage, and the several component parts be made to fall into their places more in 'a concatenation accordingly.'

ART. IV.—*Reports of the Society for the Suppression of Mendicancy, &c. &c.* London; 1838-1839.

VIRGIL places Want—*turpis Egestas*—before the vestibule of his poetical hell, in the very jaws of Orcus, and in the company of as ghastly a crew as ever presented themselves to a seer's eye. The frightful conclave includes almost every passion, vice, and

and suffering that can afflict and degrade human nature, and would almost lead to the conclusion that money is virtue. And, indeed, we fear that it must be admitted to be no fiction of the imagination, that without money it is a task of no small difficulty to be virtuous, in the times wherein our lot is cast, and in the present state of society in this country. How many thousands of spirits imprisoned in the limbos of wretchedness are panting to be free, *superasque evadere ad auras*? How many actually do emerge from the swarming gulf, bringing with them inventions in art and science that lessen the miseries, and increase the physical, the moral, and the intellectual happiness of man? On these the primæval curse has descended softened into the gentleness of mercy, and poverty has brightened their wits and sharpened their invention, purifying their souls like the silver seven times tried. Hardship and distress only serve to make such minds more determined to shine in their proper sphere, and, like the generous Godolphin Arabian, they endure on, 'biding their time' till the fortunate hour arrives which is to lift them to fame. But we are not all made of the same clay:

'The spurns

That patient merit of th' unworthy takes'

tell with fatal effect on softer natures; they feel, in its worst form, that worst of maladies, the sickness of the heart caused by hope deferred. The divine ray, worn by its efforts to struggle through the fog of prejudice and pride with which wealthy dunces surround it, wanes and dwindles; many a Milton, many a Franklin, and many a Davy remain mute and inglorious, or only flash out for a moment to be extinguished for ever.

Thus the inequality of wealth, whilst, on the one hand, it is the source of much misery, is, on the other, the mainspring of all greatness; and, in our own England, has, perhaps, more of the blessing and less of the curse than in any other country. Among imperfectly civilized nations, this inequality puts the life of the poor man at the absolute disposal of the rich man. As if to exhibit to the people the Moloch strength of unrestrained wealth and power as opposed to poverty and weakness, thousands of human beings were sacrificed at the coronation of Montezuma; and even in that terrestrial Mahomedan paradise, Otaheite—Tahiti is a different region now—where bounteous nature spreads a table for all, and

'Bread itself is gather'd as a fruit,'

it was some poor friendless wretch that was brought to the morai as a blood-offering.

There is not, it is admitted, any country in the world so rich in public charity as Great Britain; and, indeed, it has been a question

question whether our parochial and other schools, our magnificent hospitals, and our comfortable almshouses, may not be rather injurious, as tending to make men rely upon others instead of themselves. We are by no means advocates for imprudence; on the contrary, we hold self-reliance to be one of the principal ingredients for making a good and useful citizen; but there are some accidents against which no foresight can guard. There are but a favoured few who are not liable to sudden reverses; and all of us may be suddenly stricken by death, or visited with mutilation and disease in the very vigour of our days. What would become of the family of the poor man so stricken or visited, who depends on his sinews for the daily support of himself and his little ones, but for those godlike institutions? And after all, splendidly munificent as they are, there is a class of cases which they do not reach.

Those who have only witnessed poverty in the country (in England, at least) have no idea of the squalid wretchedness in great towns. The cottage, however humble, has, in almost every rural district, if that district be not quite neglected, its little plot of garden, surrounded by the fresh air, and smiled upon by the blessed light of the sun, and, in winter, is cheered by its bright bit of fire; so that the family, though poor, have their undisturbed home. In towns, three, sometimes four families are inmates of the same filthy dark *cellar*. We will just relate a London case that came under our own observation, not long ago.

An Irishman with a wife and six children (five of them at home) had employment in some lead works, and was able—great luxury—to afford a whole room for himself. In a pecuniary sense, the employment was good; but it was most unhealthy: the poor man's strength gave way under it, and he was sent to a hospital, there patched up, and told, on his discharge, that if he returned to the works it would kill him. But what was he to do? There were the children crying for bread. He *did* return to the works, was accepted and entered again on his labour; but, as he had been warned, he was soon obliged to fly for his life. Just at this time, the eldest boy, who was about fifteen, came home, having been shipwrecked, and to get him a new kit to go to sea again most of the necessaries were pawned. The parents were sober, honest, and industrious, struggled hard to live, and suffered in silence. In that dreadfully severe weather which visited us at the end of January and beginning of February, our attention was drawn to a poor girl sitting out in the streets in the snow, in almost transparent clothing, trying to turn a penny by selling chestnuts. This led to inquiry, and their room was visited. The scene that presented itself is indescribable: there
was

was no furniture, not even a bed, scarcely any body-clothing, and yet there was an attempt at decency and neatness; for the floor was swept, and an old quilt, their only night-covering, was hung up to hide the lair of rags on which the wretches stretched themselves through the long dreary wintry hours of darkness. When they were asked how they managed at night, they replied, and the reply was true, that they all huddled together for warmth. This family was clothed, and put in the way of honestly getting their living by the bounty of some benevolent noblemen and gentlemen. From the same source their furniture was restored to them, and by the judicious application of a little money, they are now doing well.

But, though private charity also—and there are few who are aware how extensive it is, and how much it is abused—distinguishes this metropolis, it is impossible that its healing influence can touch a tenth part of the cases which do really require aid.

That the subject is surrounded by difficulties we admit. On the one hand, there is the too great facility on which imposture reckons for its revels; and, on the other, the philosophy which is rather too apt to treat men like given quantities, and to answer all cries for bread with the response, 'Go, work.' This is very easily said; but we know that it is not so easily done. We know, too, instances where the poor man has, with all sincerity,

'Begg'd his lordly fellow-worm
To give him leave to toil,'

and has been met with scorn, and even threats. The most civil answer given on such occasions by certain officials has been, 'It is no business of mine to find you work.' This is precisely the behaviour that makes the poor man reckless, and leads to the worst consequences. We are *not* stocks and stones; the mother cannot see her offspring die of want. She steals a loaf. You may take her to a police court, and the justice must do his duty; but what will you gain but sympathy for the offender, sympathy arising from those natural laws—*ἀνθρώπου νόμιμα*—whose fountain is in the human heart?

'My crime! this sickening child to feed,
I seized the food your witness saw—
I knew your laws forbade the deed,
But yielded to a stronger law.'

As a matter of police, then, it becomes of the greatest consequence that the case of real distress should be distinguished from that of imposture. It is but one step, and not a very long one, between the extraction of money—it cannot with any propriety be called alms—by the importunate and sturdy beggar from the timid of either sex, and actual robbery. The mendicants of poets are generally

generally about as veracious portraits as their shepherds; and though, in the city at least, *the long-remembered beggar* may be at any time seen, he is neither quite so picturesque nor so agreeable as the guest of the Village Preacher. Indeed, we do not remember more than two respectable British beggars, Goldsmith's and Edie Ochiltree; but they were not in the roll of common men.

But the scourge of mendicity is common to all countries; and the different remedies which have been suggested and applied to destroy it are so many beacons to warn posterity from striking on the quicksands of absurdity, which certain legislators have laid down as safe harbours. To name one out of many panaceas, the sages of some German principalities thought they had cut the knot when they prohibited the poor from marrying. The wise men must have been rather astonished when they found that the population increased rapidly under the prohibition. 'Une nomenclature immense,' says M. Peuchet,* after enumerating the various causes which in this world of changes are constantly throwing thousands out of employment, 'qu'il serait très difficile et très intéressant d'établir, fournit coup sur coup et de toutes parts des légions sans travail et sans ressources, toujours à deux doigts du pillage, de l'assassinat, et du vol. La mendicité semble la transition entre les classes laborieuses et les classes criminelles; et les divers pays se les renvoyant sans cesse de l'un à l'autre par des mesures de police toujours de plus en plus restrictives, il est facile de prévoir le moment où, si l'organisation des lois sur la mendicité ne prend un ensemble européen, on se trouvera dans l'alternative de les encourager sans mesure ou de les massacrer sans pitié.' Hard measure this; but M. Peuchet knows his ground; and though England is free from some of the continental evils and dangers, she has abundance of her own.

The same author informs us that, in France, there were, in the years anterior to 1789, a considerable number of mendicants condemned to be broken on the wheel, 'pour raison d'attaques, incendies, vols, et assassinats.' This crushing rigour seems to have been as general as it was terrible—'Leurs bandes furent ainsi détruites:' horrible as the punishment was, it was clearly necessary that some strong measures should be resorted to; for it appears from the documents connected with their trials, that those beggars were neither more nor less than brigands regularly united together for the commission of crime, and that their associations extended through whole provinces. Till this heavy judgment fell upon them they lived, as regular beggars in all countries think themselves entitled to do, luxuriously. They were a rich fraternity. The foolish among them were hoarders, the wise usurers; and the

* Mémoires tirés des Archives de la Police. Paris, 1838.

specimen of their *menus plaisirs*, we beg to introduce our patrons to one of the quarterly festivals of the beggars of *vieille France*. Translate it we will not; the eloquence of the worthy *Sieur Vincent*, 'Agent de police,' would suffer too grievously from an attempt to force it into an English dress.

'The following then is this agent's official report—transcribed by M. Peuchet—*Sur le dîner que l'état-major de la confrérie des mendiants de la capitale donna, dans l'année 1786, chez un marchand de vin de la rue Saint-Jacques.*'

'Je me suis transporté chez le *sieur Drouet*, cabaretier, près de l'Estrapade. Il avait fait, dès le matin, enlever les cloisons d'une salle basse, dont les fenêtres grillées donnent sur le clos des *Génovéfains*. Une table en fer-à-cheval, large et clouée sur de puissans tréteaux, se trouvait disposée, chargée de près de deux cents couverts. Le *sieur Drouet*, que je connais de longue date, consentit à satisfaire ma curiosité, et me fit passer près des commissaires ordonnateurs du festin pour un de ses neveux; en cette qualité, je dus mettre la main aux accessoires du service, afin que mon oncle prétendu vaquât librement aux soins de la cuisine, où dix aides, appelés pour ce surcroît de besogne, s'agitaient dans une épaisse fumée.

'Une loueuse de chaises d'un jardin public avait fourni deux cents tabourets, et l'on avait fouillé dans l'arsenal des théâtres forains à l'effet de tapisser les parois de cette cave, dont la vétusté disparaissait sous un bariolage de décorations hétéroclites; des potences de bois simulaient çà et là des candélabres, et, comme autant de poignets, portaient des régimens de chandelles que messieurs les commissaires mouchaient fort lestement avec les doigts. Malgré les temples et les cascades des décors tachés de graisse, rien ne faisait présager encore le luxe dont on m'avait promis l'étalage. A la vérité, messieurs les pauvres de Paris ne donnent pas dans ces babioles, et comprennent beaucoup plus le faste de l'estomac que la prétintaille des ornemens. Les vins furent dégustés l'un après l'autre, patiemment; et, malgré ma fatuité de connaisseur et l'astuce de mon très cher oncle qui chicanait sur les qualités et sur les âges, je fus obligé de rendre des points à ces gourmets émérités—qui se dissertèrent comme une assemblée de rois sur les clos des divers pays, et sur les procédés des particuliers et des marchands, dans la falsification de leurs denrées; les bouteilles suspectes furent écartées et remplacées; on aura pu les vendre à des bourgeois. C'est parmi ces fins dégustateurs qu'il faut prendre les surveillans des cabarctiers. Les vins acceptés furent rangés en pyramide dans un cûin, et l'on ne les perdit pas de vue. On chargea les tables de friandises; le déploiement des hors-d'œuvres nous donna de l'appétit: sardines, anchois, olives, mille délicatesses de la saison; des pâtés de venaison tout chauds, qui jetaient un fumet exquis; des chapons de la Bresse, des gigots musqués de cette petite pointe d'ail dont l'eau vient à la bouche rien qu'en y songeant; des forteresses de côtelettes désossées et poudrées de fine chapelure; quelques hures de sanglier dans leur gelée crenelée comme une forteresse; des saladiers remplis d'oranges de Portugal, coupées
par

par tranches, baignant d'eau-de-vie ; bref, tout un assortiment de dessert comme dans les galas de l'Hôtel-de-Ville pour les élections des échevins, chargeait à la fois cette table, tandis que l'on marquait les places avec un soin que l'on n'a pas toujours dans les meilleures maisons de Paris. Un ordre merveilleux se faisait comprendre dans les distributions de ce pêle-mêle. Drouet me fit sentir que nul ne devait assister à ce festin que les élus, et que, pour cet effet, on devait servir tout à la fois : je vis qu'il me faudrait déguerpir. Les précautions prises pour qu'il ne se glissât pas d'intrus parmi les convives étaient extrêmes, et consistaient en certains mots de passe auxquels on devait en répondre d'autres qui se succédaient comme des numéros d'ordre.

Sur une table particulière, dressée au centre du fer-à-cheval que formait la table des convives, on plaça, quand vint le gros de l'assemblée, des soupières enveloppées avec soin pour que leur chaleur ne s'évaporât pas. Je n'ai pas pu deviner ce que contenaient ces bienheureuses soupières. Mais à la grimace de délectation qui gonfla toutes ces figures de bandits, à leurs yeux étincelans comme des escarboucles, je compris qu'on était satisfait du cabaretier. Quatre cochons de lait, dont les entrailles étaient recousues, devaient contenir également des merveilles gastronomiques dans leur intérieur. Les invités cependant arrivaient coup sur coup, se groupaient, se félicitaient, s'intéressaient l'un à l'autre ; quelques-uns vinrent en fiacre. Je reconnus là des gourgandines qui se tiennent à la porte des églises, parées, biçhonnées, décrassées pour ce jour-là, et que, dans tout autre temps, on ne toucherait certainement pas avec des pincettes. Il fallait voir la métamorphose pour y croire ; les estropiés étaient en fort grand nombre ; on n'a pas plus de civilités dans les façons chez les riches bourgeois de la rue des Lombards. Le trait caractéristique de la plupart de ces physionomies était un regard perçant et moqueur. Quelques aveugles furent amenés par leurs soi-disant filles, squelettes liés au sort de ces braves gens, pour l'intérêt de leur commerce, et sur lesquelles un carabin prendrait des leçons d'ostéologie sans avoir besoin de les faire écorcher. Du reste, il faut que ce soit leur acabit naturel, car lorsqu'il fut question de déplacer une des longues tables, pour établir un courant de circulation entre les tabourets et les murailles, quatre de ces momies, dont les articulations semblaient devoir se disjoindre au moindre choc, soulevèrent le massif avec une prestesse dont on ne les aurait pas crues capables. Des mendiants galantins apportèrent des fleurs qui, bientôt, sur le corsage de ces dames, jurèrent avec leurs figures rancées et revêches ; leur sourire de remerciement aurait fait fuir le diable, il m'ôta l'appétit. Les pralines et les bonbons, les pastilles ambrées, les liqueurs pour s'ouvrir l'estomac, circulèrent au choix des invités ; et deux clarinettes donnant le signal, car ces gail-lards-là mangeaient au son des instrumens, les commissaires me firent déguerpir avec les autres gens de service. On ferma soigneusement les portes ; le sieur Drouet, avec qui je renouai plus amplement connaissance, en jugeant quelques-unes des bouteilles mal à propos déclarées suspectes et qui se laissèrent boire, m'apprit que chaque convive payait par tête la somme de six livres, sans compter les liqueurs et le café.

Les principaux gueux de Paris, la haute classe des mendiants, connus pour

pour les plus huppés, protégés par les dévotes de M. l'archevêque de Paris, dont ils sont les courtiers et les espions, font de ces solennités quatre fois par an, rarement dans le même endroit deux fois de suite; ils ne manquent jamais, au préalable, d'envoyer des commissaires chargés de débattre les prix. Malgré toute leur finesse, on les attrape encore. Il est probable que, dans ces repas, s'agitent les grands intérêts du métier, les conventions pour interdire de force ou de gré la place à des demandeurs qui ne sont pas de la confrérie. On sait l'art d'écraser un faux frère et de l'expulser. Je dois me trouver avec un des commissaires, et si c'est l'intention de M. le lieutenant de police, en ma qualité de joueur de flûte, j'espère obtenir la faveur d'assister en personne à l'une de ces prochaines bacchanales.'

We strongly recommend the study of the above to Mr. Gunter; and if he will condescend to take a few hints from the refinements of this *fête*, great will be the gratification of the noble and illustrious guests who may have the good fortune to make the assay of his handiwork, and eloquent will be the columns of the Morning Post immortalizing his efforts.

That the same country where these elegant orgies were celebrated still retained the *pauvre honteux*, we have evidence in a touching story which will be found at p. 69 of M. Peuchet's book, and well bears out an apophthegm of his relating to his countrymen,—*Faire envie plutôt que pitié, c'est la maxime du peuple*. As M. de Malherbes and Madame de Staël were driving together in the Place Vendôme, in 1785, the horses threw down a man who was absolutely dying of hunger, but who still kept his high spirit, and, when the coachman declared what his state was, proudly and angrily answered that he had but that moment left a *cabaret*, endeavouring to turn into ridicule the alarm of the pitying domestic. He tried to walk away,—but stumbled and fell from sheer weakness. During his fainting fit his pockets were searched and his address found. M. de Malherbes went to the dwelling of this unfortunate, and there beheld—and we need not add relieved—a family of spectres who had not tasted nourishment for three days. Here we have one of the many instances of unknown misery in large towns—misery which is seldom projected on public notice, excepting when our attention is suddenly aroused and our feelings shocked by finding that a miserable fellow-creature has expired for want in the midst of plenty, a solitary outcast surrounded by a population of 1,500,000 souls.

The British beggar by profession has had his portrait-painters in almost all ages. Under Henry VIII. the mendicants, driven to desperation by the suppression of the monasteries, had recourse to such excesses that we find 72,000 of them hanged for thieving in that reign. (G. R. vol. lxii. p. 70.) Shakspeare thus paints the vagrant of his time—

'My

'My face I'll grime with filth;
Blanket my loins; else all my hair in knots;
And with presented nakedness outface
The winds, and persecutions of the sky.
The country gives me proof and precedent
Of bedlam beggars, who, with roaring voices,
Strike in their numb'd and mortify'd bare arms
Pins, wooden pricks, nails, sprigs of rosemary;
And with this horrible object, from low farms,
Poor pelting villages, sheep-cotes and mills,
Sometimes with lunatic bans, sometimes with pray'rs,
Inforce their charity.'

We shall now take leave to present one or two more modern pictures—the first drawn by the hand of a master, before whose piercing eye all human follies and frailties were laid bare; and how refreshing it is to return to the vigorous, healthy air of his style, after being perfumed and pastilled to death by the tawdry trash of the day. There is more strength in half a page of Fielding or Smollett than in a whole ship-load of the diluted, maudlin, sickly sentimentality with which the so-called *fashionable novelists*, male, female, and epicene, drench their patients. Thus speaks Julian, by the mouth of Fielding:—

'I was born into a very poor and numerous family, which, to be honest with you, procured its livelihood by begging. This, if you was never yourself of the calling, you do not know, I suppose, to be as regular a trade as any other; to have its several rules and secrets, or mysteries, which to learn requires perhaps as tedious an apprenticeship as those of any craft whatever.

'The first thing we are taught is the countenance miserable. This, indeed, nature makes much easier to some than others; but there are none who cannot accomplish it if they begin early enough in youth, and before the muscles are grown too stubborn.

'The second thing is the voice lamentable. In this qualification, too, nature must have her share in producing the most consummate excellence: however, art will here, as in every other instance, go a great way with industry and application, even without the assistance of genius, especially if the student begins young.

'There are many other instructions, but these are the most considerable. The women are taught one practice more than the men, for they are instructed in the art of crying, that is, to have their tears ready on all occasions; but this is attained very easily by most. Some, indeed, arrive at the utmost perfection in this art with incredible facility.

'No profession requires a deeper insight into human nature than the beggar's. Their knowledge of the passions of men is so extensive, that I have often thought it would be of no little service to a politician to have his education among them. Nay, there is a much greater similarity between these two characters than is imagined: for both concur in their first and grand principle, it being equally their business to delude and

impose on mankind. It must be confessed that they differ widely in the degree of advantage which they make by their deceit: for, whereas the beggar is contented with a little, the politician leaves but a little behind.'

The whole chapter is admirable; but we have only room for the conclusion.

'The luxury of our lives might introduce diseases, did not our daily exercise prevent them. This gives us an appetite and relish for our dainties, and at the same time an antidote against the evil effects which sloth united with luxury induces on the habit of the human body. . . . I can, I am assured, say of myself, that no mortal could reap more happiness from the tender passion than my fortune had decreed me. I married a charming young woman for love; she was the daughter of a neighbouring beggar, who, with an improvidence too often seen, spent a very large income which he procured by his profession, so that he was able to give her no fortune down: however, at his death, he left her a very well-accustomed begging-hut, situated on the side of a steep hill, where travellers could not immediately escape from us, and a garden adjoining, being the twenty-eighth part of an acre, well planted. She made the best of wives, bore me nineteen children, and never failed, unless on her lying-in, which generally lasted three days, to get my supper ready against my return home in an evening, this being my favourite meal, and at which I, as well as my whole family, greatly enjoyed ourselves, the principal subject of our discourse being generally the spoons we had that day obtained, on which occasions laughing at the folly of the donors made no inconsiderable part of the entertainment: for whatever might be their motive for giving, we constantly imputed our success to our having flattered their vanity or overreached their understandings.'—*Journey from this World to the Next.*

The habits of the fraternity in the beginning of the eighteenth century are thus depicted by one who, like Fielding, knew London thoroughly:—

'I looked out of my window the other morning earlier than ordinary and saw a blind beggar, an hour before the passage he stands in is frequented, with a needle and thread, thriftily mending his stockings. My astonishment was still greater when I beheld a lame fellow, whose legs were too big to walk, within an hour after, bring him a pot of ale. I will not mention the shakings, distortions, and convulsions which many of them practise to gain an alms; but sure I am they ought to be taken care of in this condition either by the beadle or the magistrate. They, it seems, relieve their posts according to their talents. There is the voice of an old woman, who never begins to beg till nine in the evening, and then she is destitute of lodging, turned out for want of rent, and has the same ill fortune every night in the year. You should employ an officer to hear the distress of each beggar that is constant at a particular place, who is ever in the same tone, and succeeds because his audience is continually changing, though he does not alter his lamentation. If we have nothing else for our money, let us have more imitation to be cheated with.'—*Spectator*, No. 430.

The

The wish here expressed by Steele has been in great measure realised by a society which has had no small abuse lavished upon it by maudlin sympathisers. It is very easy to call it a society for relieving the poor by giving them nothing; but, like everything in England that has a sure foundation, it has struggled through evil report and good report till it has risen, like the grain of mustard-seed, to a goodly tree of refuge for the really deserving objects of compassion, whilst it aids in administering due chastisement to the profligate and the wicked. The reports of the Society for the Suppression of Mendicity state that it is instituted '*for the purpose of checking the practice of public mendicity, with all its baneful and demoralising consequences; by putting the laws in force against impostors, who adopt it as a trade, and by affording prompt and effectual assistance to those whom sudden calamity and unaffected distress may cast in want and misery upon the public attention.*'

We shall, by-and-by, return to this excellent society; but in the mean time let us inquire what may be the actual number of persons who live by begging in Great Britain at the present time. To obtain exact information on subjects of this kind is seldom easy, and in former days very loose statements went down. The Commissioners appointed to inquire as to the best means of establishing an efficient constabulary force in the counties of England and Wales adduce, as an example, the estimate of the number of prostitutes given by Colquhoun in his work on the police of London—namely, 50,000:—

'The whole male population of London and Westminster and the parishes within the Bills of Mortality was,' say the Commissioners, 'according to the actual enumeration of 1801, the period to which he referred, only about 400,000. But after deducting the children and the very old, the remainder capable of contributing to the support of the vice of prostitution would not be more than from 150,000 to 200,000 at the extreme. Allowing that all were licentious in their habits, the learned magistrate's estimate gave one prostitute for every three or four males, and alleged that every third or fourth female was a professed prostitute. In a recent address, published by a voluntary association for the Suppression of Prostitution, the number of prostitutes in the metropolis was stated to be not less than 80,000. The actual enumeration shows that, at this time, the number of known prostitutes living amidst nearly a million and a half of the population does not exceed 7,000. We may observe, that the proportion of this unfortunate class to the population is similar in Paris, the average number during the year 1832 being 3,558, according to the police registers of that metropolis.'

It is of the highest importance that something like accuracy should be attended to before societies, consisting of well-meaning persons, give to the public the numbers of the class whom they intend

intend to reform. In their eagerness to astonish by the amount of immorality and crime, they forget that such overwhelming numbers rather scare than attract the reflective philanthropist.

With regard to the class which forms the subject of our inquiry, upwards of eighteen thousand commitments, per annum, of persons for the offence of vagrancy mark the extent of the body from which they are taken.* Mr. Mayne, one of the Police Commissioners, states the number of persons carried before the metropolitan magistrates in the year 1837, for begging, at 4000. These numbers are sufficiently large, but there is nothing in their amount to produce despair, if the proper remedies are promptly and vigorously applied.

Commencing with the street-beggars of London, our attention is first attracted to the lame and the blind. The loss of limbs and the loss of sight strike upon the fortunate possessor of both, and silver seldom fails to come from the hand of those blessed with competence, while the hard-earned copper money of the poor servant girl is sure to find its way into the hat of the cripple, and the little open tin-box carried by the worthy doggie that leads the blind man. The characters of these peripatetics are thus given by Mr. Knevitt, an assistant manager of the Mendicity Society:—

‘Do your constables apprehend blind men who walk the streets at certain hours with laces and other trifles for sale, but whose gestures and tone of voice point them out as beggars?—Occasionally, but it is very rarely they are committed by magistrates.

‘You sometimes see cripples, lamentably injured, drawn in carts or dragging themselves along the streets by means of crutches; do you think the sympathy of the public is so strong for them, or the blind men, that they prefer enduring the nuisance of their exhibition and solicitation to their being taken before a magistrate and committed?—I do; and many of them can make very considerable sums.

‘Is it not a painful truth that these blind beggars are generally men of very bad characters?—The greater part of them are known to the officers as bad characters.

‘Can you give an instance of remarkable depravity on the part of mendicants of this description?—Yes, I can; I have in my recollection the circumstances of one man who has been convicted many times of keeping a notorious brothel, one of these blind men.

‘Such being the general imputation on blind beggars, does it not appear both reasonable and just that they should not be exempted from the restrictions imposed on other vagrants, and is it not likely that, these facts being known, the popular objections to their apprehension will cease?—I think they will; I have known many instances of blind men being apprehended and taken before magistrates; they have

* Report of Constabulary Force Commissioners.

offered either to send them to prison or to the workhouse; to prevent going to prison they have accepted the workhouse, and a few days afterwards they have left again: I have many instances.

‘Most of these people having parishes in London, or elsewhere, many persons consider it a hardship to compel them to resort thither instead of allowing them, from false lenity, constantly to infringe the law?—Many persons would consider it a great hardship to confine them to the workhouse.

‘Are the cripples alluded to generally bad characters?—A great many of them are: a blind man was recently threatened to be committed to prison; he had been apprehended many times; the magistrate told him unless he went in the workhouse and remained there, he should be committed to the house of correction; he consented to go; his plea was, his daughter was out of place; an officer was sent to say we would assist in clothing the daughter if she could get a place; the mother said, “No, no, she don’t want any place;” she was a decent pretty-looking girl about 16. This girl is in the habit of going out with her father, and leading him from one principal thoroughfare to another, and then loitering about in the neighbourhood; as I explained to the father, he was leading the girl into temptation; being blind, he could not see what she was doing, or what company she was in.

‘When blind men are sent to the house of correction, are they put to hard labour?—I believe not.

‘In what manner does the fact of a blind man being sent to the house of correction operate as a punishment?—I am not aware; I never visited the house of correction; I never was in it, and do not know in what way they employ them, but I should think picking oakum.

‘According to that view, there is little difference between their treatment in the house of correction or the workhouse?—Only when they are in the house of correction they are prisoners for the time, but if they think proper to insist on leaving the workhouse, they have no authority to keep them in.’—*Select Committee on Metropolis Police Offices, Evidence*, pp. 90, 91.

The same witness is asked whether he finds that the robust beggar generally submits to the test of work? His reply should be borne in mind by those who delude themselves into the idea that they are performing an act of charity by giving money to the mendicant:—

‘It is a very rare thing’—he answers—‘they remain at work!—it is a very rare; they can get more money by begging in one day than many mechanics. I have known instances of beggars being apprehended with from 1*l.*, 2*l.* or 3*l.* or 4*l.*; and I have, on one occasion, known a man apprehended in Tottenham Court Road who had 8*l.* or 10*l.* about him.’

It is not uncommon for one of these gentlemen, with a child in his arms and with a woman who passes for his wife, leading two or three other children near him, to accost the solitary passenger in the voice lamentable, especially on a Saturday night, with ‘Neither money nor food for to-morrow.’ The good-hearted
man

man to whom this appeal is made forgets in his benevolence, as he hands the splendid shilling, how many pence, fourpences, sixpences, and shillings, abstracted from other good-hearted men and women, the mendicant has already bagged; and little thinks, as he walks away congratulating himself with having saved a family from starvation, that the pockets of the beggar contain more money than his own.

Mr. Knevitt is asked whether the Society apprehends many females :—

‘Some of the most notorious vagrants in London are females. There is a girl with one eye, of the name of Brady, who has been in prison not less than from thirty to twenty-six times, within the last six years; she spends more than half her time in prison. The moment she comes out, she goes begging; one of her most favourite parts is St. James’s Square, but she is to be found in all parts of the town and city; she has been repeatedly committed for two or three months, but she no sooner comes out than she goes to her old habits.’

Again,—

‘Have you observed that begging on a Sunday is more rare than on weak days?—Yes.

‘How do you account for that circumstance?—I do not know how to account for it, but it is a fact. I believe that the notorious beggars get a great deal of money on a Saturday night from mechanics’ wives and others they meet going to market. The notorious Quinn, a man that is about London, with a white night-cap, is generally out of a Saturday night, sitting on some steps, pretending to be dying; the moment he is recognised by anybody who knows him he takes to his heels and runs as fast as most men in London. He is now in prison.’—*Evidence*, p. 92.

The truth is that the professional beggar picks up a good harvest on a Saturday night, and, like other industrious people, finds the hebdomadal day of rest necessary.

We should be sorry to open up the scenes where the great portion of the money given to the street beggar is spent. The curious reader may refer to Burns, whose poetry on this subject is no fiction. As it must be, however, a comfort to the charitable and humane to know how their money is spent, when it is laid out in the most innocent way, we beg to present them with the following question and answer :—

‘Are beggars, in your judgment, so hardened that the facility of obtaining work has no effect upon them?—None whatever; they would not work on any terms, the greater part of them; there is a boy of the name of Tomkins that has been repeatedly in prison, an interesting child; he sits up with a paper before his face, “Pity the poor;” he says his father is a respectable mechanic; the magistrates, on various occasions, have sent for the father, and he has taken him home; at last the

the boy became so incorrigible, the father would have nothing more to do with him; that boy has said he has got half-a-sovereign a-day by begging; I asked how he spent it; *he said he usually went to the play and took some boys and girls with him.* This boy has not been in prison less than twenty times within the last three years.'—*Evidence*, p. 93.

The various modes of exciting compassion are infinite. To pass over the different established methods of simulating diseases, from the last stage of a jaundice, upon which the patient has lived in comfort for years, to the more active performer who subsists upon convulsion-fits, with the aid of a little soap, we will for the present notice two of the more ordinary ways of working on the feelings of the tender-hearted, especially in towns. Two, or, if they can be procured, three fine bouncing babies of the same age, and as like each other as possible—no difficult matter to accomplish—for to most eyes, except the discriminating eye of the mother, all babies are alike—are infallible charms for expanding the hearts and the purses of the dear, good women, especially those who are, have been, or are about to become mothers. Their bosoms would be unyielding flint before this 'Open, Sesame!' did they know all. The bantlings are generally hired at so much a day, and the pseudo-mother sits with them displayed asleep in her capacious lap—no bad representative, especially when the woman is comely, of the teeming goddess herself. Conversations have been overheard as to the rate at which the young creatures had been *rented*, and surprise has been expressed by an old practitioner at the large sum given by one not so well versed in the market. 'How much did you give for yours?'—'A shilling a-piece.'—'A shilling a-piece!—Vy then you've been done, or babbies is riz; one or t'other—I only give sixpence for mine, and they feeds 'em and Godfrey's-cordials 'em and all, afore I takes 'em, into the bargain.'

A real mother with a fine family is a prize to a male practitioner. 'Many vagrants,' says Mr. Knevitt, 'consider picking up a woman with five or six little interesting children almost a fortune to them, and they remain with them a certain time when they leave them.'

In London, parents send out their children, when they are old enough, to gather alms: if the poor little things do not bring home the required sum, they are severely beaten. A child's first theft is often committed in order to make up the amount.

The begging-letter department is another of the most successful. If the charitable could but see, as we have seen, whole packets of letters in the same hand, but each setting forth a different catalogue of misfortunes, found on the same practitioner, and intended to be used, like some medical prescriptions, *prout*
occasio

postulet, the very sight of a begging letter would, at once, freeze their charity, however warm it might be.

Sheridan has touched this mode of levying contributions with his usual felicity, when he makes Mr. Puff declare that he supported himself two years entirely by his misfortunes.

‘*Sneer*.—By your misfortunes?

‘*Puff*.—Yes, Sir,—assisted by long sickness and other occasional disorders; and a very comfortable living I had of it.

‘*Sneer*.—From sickness and misfortunes!—Your practised as a Doctor and an Attorney at once?

‘*Puff*.—No, egad, both maladies and miseries were my own.

‘*Sneer*.—Hey!—what the plague!

‘*Dangle*.—’Tis true, i’faith.

‘*Puff*.—Harkee!—By advertisements—“To the charitable and humane!”—and—“To those whom Providence hath blessed with affluence!”

‘*Sneer*.—Oh!—I understand you.

‘*Puff*.—And, in truth, I deserved what I got, for I suppose never man went through such a series of calamities in the same space of time!—Sir, I was five times made a bankrupt, and reduced from a state of affluence by a train of unavoidable misfortunes! Then, Sir, tho’ a very industrious tradesman, I was twice burnt out, and lost my little all, both times!—I lived upon those fires a month.—I soon after was confined by a most excruciating disorder, and lost the use of my limbs!—That told very well, for I had the case strongly attested, and went about to collect the subscriptions myself.

‘*Dangle*.—Egad, I believe that was when you first called on me.

‘*Puff*.—In November last?—O, no! I was at that time a close prisoner in the Marshalsea, for a debt benevolently contracted to serve a friend! I was, afterwards, twice tapped for a dropsy, which declined into a very profitable consumption. I was then reduced to—O, no—then I became a widow with six helpless children,—after having had eleven husbands pressed, and being left every time eight months gone with child, and without money to get me into an hospital!

‘*Sneer*.—And you bore all with patience, I make no doubt?

‘*Puff*.—Why, yes,—tho’ I made some occasional attempts at *felo de se*; but as I did not find those rash actions answer, I left off killing myself very soon. Well, Sir, at last with bankruptcies, fires, gouts, dropsies, imprisonments, and other valuable calamities, having got together a pretty handsome sum, I determined to quit a business which had always gone rather against my conscience.

‘*Sneer*.—Most obligingly communicative indeed; and your confession, if published, might certainly serve the cause of true charity, by reserving the most useful channels of appeal to benevolence from the cant of imposition.’

Mr. Puff’s mantle has fallen upon more than one eloquent descendant. We find from the confession of an experienced vagrant that he knows—

‘Two

‘ Two begging letter-writers, Lawyer B—— and Captain M——. B—— was a lawyer at Ipswich; was divorced from his wife, and lives in a very dejected state. He can write a capital letter, *enough to make any of the quality people cry*. The begging-letter people give him a shilling for a letter. He is now travelling as a match-seller. Captain M—— is a short man, not five feet high, dark hair: travels all over England, and writes begging-letters, but not so well as B——. He is on the “high fly,” and has been a tramping impostor about 23 or 24 years. His constant story is, that he has just lost his ship.’*

The writing of these letters is a regular profession, and there are houses of call where the *Litterateurs* are in attendance in order to receive their clients. In London an interleaved copy of the Court Guide, with annotations indicating ready victims, and affording useful hints of various sorts, forms part of the usual stock-in-trade, and is at the service of such as do not grudge the counsellor’s *honorarium*.

We will now suppose the London season to be over. Grisi has warbled her last scena; Taglioni has gracefully bounded and descended, as if the sylph’s wings really sustained her, for the last time; and Elsler’s *cachucha* no longer takes all hearts by storm. All the gay birds of paradise are fled to rural or Neptunian haunts; but they do not migrate alone. The laborious of all classes remain to fulfil their appointed tasks; the honest hard-handed mechanic still toils on amid the smoke and the smother, with his stunted plant of *old man* on the window-sill of his garret to remind him that there is such a thing as vegetation. Not so the joyous mendicants.—We again quote the evidence of Mr. Kneviatt:—

‘ The amount of mendicity fluctuates very much with the state of the season, does it not?—Yes, it does; many leave early in the spring; they have their favourite watering-places, and some go to Cheltenham, and some to Bath; they travel the whole country. The child of a beggar told me, a few days ago, that they considered Reading one of the best places in England.’

The habits of these itinerants are well described by the experienced person whose evidence we have above quoted as to the begging-letter department. Here is some more of his confession, taken by Mr. Miles:—

‘ He was bound to the master of a fishing-smack at Harwich: master went to the dogs, and he went upon the world. Got into the Rotterdam trade; brought a Jew home one voyage, who lives in Rosemary Lane (Rag Fair): keeps a clothes-shop. The Jew persuaded him to smuggle; pointed out a locker to him, and suggested a false bottom; promised to buy all he would bring. The hint was adopted, and packages

* Report of Constabulary Force Commissioners.

of snuff, tobacco, and strings of coral beads were brought over ; about fifty packages in a voyage. The Jew kept his word, and gave about 2s. 6d. a package for tobacco ; but he could not keep his situation. The locker was ultimately detected : he lost his ship, and at last his character, and his clothes, among the worthless classes at the dancing-houses in Wapping, and near the dock-gates. About five or six months ago he took a wife and took to begging ; thanks to the Jew.

' Beggars tramp about from town to town : there is a low lodging-house for travellers in every village : they tell the people that they are travelling to find work, but pray to God they may never get it. They all go out "to walk" in the mornings, and return at night to their lodging-houses, where they live well, and spend the day's produce in drinking. They are merry fellows, money or no money, and laugh at the people for "flats." They tell each other what houses are "good," and arrange their districts so as not to interfere with each other. Every tramp is accompanied by his fancy girl or his wife. A black fellow, who is well known about Deptford, and goes about the streets singing and dancing, takes his country journeys with two women, and makes plenty of money to pay all their expenses.'

' The price of their bed is threepence ; always two in a bed ; sometimes ten or fifteen in a room. A lodging-housekeeper in the Mint has a similar establishment at Romford, containing twenty-four beds, which is superintended by his agent. "Tiger-faced Sal," at Wimbach, keeps the worst lodging-house he ever saw. She buys any stolen property.

' The private lodging-house is always frequented by the following trades or callings. They all have their appropriate cant names.*

' 1st. Men who go about the country almost naked begging clothes or food. They get about 3s. a-day. They have good clothes at their lodging-house, and travel in them from town to town, if there are not many houses in the way. Before they enter the town they take them off, as well as their shoes and stockings, put on their Guernsey jackets, send the bundle and the woman forward to the lodging-house, and commence begging at the first house they come to. Knows a man who was recently clad from head to foot in new clothes at a shop in Billerica, by the son of the rector in a neighbouring village, all of which clothes, including hat, shoes, and stockings, he sold about half an hour afterwards, by auction, in the tap-room of a low public-house, to his companions, and they all got drunk together with the proceeds. These fellows always sell a gift of clothes.

' 2nd. Men who are ring-droppers. Travelling tinkers make sham gold rings out of old brass buttons. H—— D—— is a noted fellow at this work ; his wife and mother go with him and drop the rings. They live in St. Giles's, and travel for a month or two. They sometimes make 20s. or 25s. a-day.

' 3rd. Fellows who go round to different houses, stating their master's stock of rags has been burnt, or that a sudden supply is wanted, and that they are sent forward to collect them. The rags are called for, and one fellow marches off with the bundle, leaving one or more talking with

with the housewife, who is gravely cavilling about the price, and as gravely informed that the master is coming round, and they leave some private mark on the door-post, which they say is the sign to indicate to him the quantity and quality taken, and the amount to pay; so they walk off, and "never tip her anything." The rags are carried to the keeper of a rag-shop, who gives quires of paper in exchange, which they carry round to small villages, and sell to small shopkeepers, or at farm-houses. All rag-shops "stand fence for anything," and buy any stolen property, or metal, from iron hoops to gold rings.

'4th. A set of fellows who go about in decent apparel, leaving small printed handbills at cottages and farm-houses, wherein are set forth the wonderful cures of all sorts of ailments, effected by medicine which they sell. The following day these bills are called for, and the credulous people buy small phials of this nostrum, at various prices, from ten shillings to sixpence, according to the tact of the beggar, and the folly of the party. The mixture is only a decoction of any herb or rubbish that may be at hand. He (B——) was told by one of this class that he had just sold a bottle of "stuff" to a poor woman who lived in a cottage on Warley Common, Essex, and who had been long ailing. She gave ten shillings for it, and it was only salt and water, some tea, and coloured green with nettle tops. These fellows obtain more money than any other class of impostors, sometimes as much as 2*l.* a-week, and they seldom go to London.

'5th. Men who travel about the country in shabby-genteel attire, stating that they had been well off formerly, but are reduced by recent misfortune. Some are burnt-out farmers or shopkeepers; some first-class workmen out of work, owing to the bankruptcy of their employers; some captains, who have just lost their ships upon the coast. This story is always used after a heavy gale of wind. Some carry begging-letters, which are written for them, price 1*s.* This is very profitable, if well managed. The "Lady Bountifuls" are great supporters of these fellows.

'6th. Fortune-tellers. Many women, when tramping with the men, dress themselves like gipsies, and contrive to get a tolerable daily booty, at least 3*s.* or 4*s.* a-day.

'7th. Trampers who have nothing to sell, but manage to live merely by begging.

'8th. Thieves—"prigs"—generally go in couples; walk into a country shop, where there is an old woman and a candle; buy something, drop a sixpence; get the old lady to bring the candle round to look for it, while the other fellow is filling his pockets with whatever he can lay his hands upon.

'9th. Match-sellers. 10th. Ballad-singers.

'11th. Fellows who boil up fat and a little soap over night, run it out in a cloth, and next morning cut it up like cakes of Windsor soap. It's all bad, but they drive a good trade.

'12th. Fellows who go from house to house, stating that they live in some neighbouring town, and ask for "umbrellas to mend." An active fellow in this line will make a clean sweep of all the umbrellas in a village

village before dinner. These umbrellas are produced in the London market on wet days and dusky evenings.

'13th. A Jew seldom thieves, but is worse than a thief; he encourages others to thieve. In every town there is a Jew, either resident or tramping; sure to be a Jew within forty-eight hours in the town, somehow or other. If a robbery is effected, the property is hid till a Jew is found, and a bargain is then made.'

Of gipsies we at present say nothing, as they more properly belong to the class of thieves; and we wish to confine ourselves as much as possible to mendicity in this article. So many, however, of the class of vagrants carry on a kind of mixed practice (of begging and thieving) that this is not a very easy task.

The provincial houses for the accommodation of mendicants are also the places of refuge for the common thief, and to them and from them flows that stream of vagrancy and crime, which, gathering strength as it wanders from its polluted source, will inundate the country, if it be not dried up. H——, a prisoner in Salford gaol, who gives a full and particular account of himself and his 'Pal,' P——, describes, *inter alia*, a trip to Kidderminster.

"At every lodging-house on the road H—— met plenty of trampers, and he did not see one face that he had not seen at St. Giles's. They also recognised him, and compared notes. Some were hawkers, some were going half-naked, some were ballad-singers, some were going about with false letters, others as broken-down tradesmen, some as old soldiers, some as shipwrecked sailors; and every night they told each other of *good houses*. They all lived well, never ate any broken victuals, but had meat breakfasts, good dinners, hot suppers, and frequently ended by going to bed very drunk. Not one spent less than 3s. a-day, many a great deal more. They sometimes make 5s. and average 3s. 6d. per day; some often get a sovereign where humane people reside.

'P——, having been employed at a carpet-manufactory before he came to London, went to visit his old friends, and was soon able to introduce H——. Every day stole balls of twine and string. The first lot they sold was worth about 1l., and they got 10s. 6d. for it. They lived by plundering the manufactories and picking pockets in the streets. Some of the property they pawned, some they sold to trampers at the lodging-houses.'

Mr. D. King, of Brighton, says—

'There are numerous lodging-houses, the keepers of which furnish matches, songs, laces, and many other petty articles, which are hawked about as an excuse for vagrancy, thereby avoiding direct begging; and it gives them opportunities of going down areas under pretence of selling their wares, by which they have every chance of pilfering any article that may be inadvertently exposed, and, what is of greater consequence, observing the fastenings and other circumstances that may lead to robbery;

bery; for the undersigned has no hesitation in declaring his belief that the principal robberies effected in Brighton have been concocted in a vagrant lodging-house, and rendered effectual through the agency of the keepers; and signals are not communicated more regularly by the telegraph than intelligence is given and received amongst vagrants. One method is for the keeper to furnish his moving lodgers with cards of his house when the parties leave, which they give to any vagrant they meet coming to Brighton, receiving in return the notification of the house in the town to which they are journeying.”*

The magistrates of Chester say—

‘We have from 150 to 200 lodging-houses in the borough for vagrants, trampers, and thieves. Many of these have been notorious for thieves of the first class.’

A young vagrant of nineteen says—

‘I had no money when I got to Chester; I went into the market, got two dishes of butter and some eggs; I then went to a lodging-house, and put the butter down, and asked if I could have lodging: the woman said, ‘Oh, ay; I reckon thou hast been on the priggish order?’ I said, What else? She bought the butter of me, and gave me about half price for it.”

Another of the same class says—

‘If we had been after any game, and got a stake, we went to the lodging-house, and changed our clothes.’

A prisoner, when questioned how far the fear of the constables influenced his practices or pursuits, says,—

‘Not much in country towns, the people in the lodging-houses would put us up to them.’

Another boy says—

‘I was enticed from my work by some lads, and we fetched a money-drawer out of a shop. When I was not working I used to contrive to get the amount of my wages on a Saturday night, and took it home to deceive my parents. I used to daub myself with cotton waste to make my mother think I had been to my work. I got acquainted with three men in a lodging-house; they told me I should always have plenty of money and nothing to do. I went on tramp with them. When lads run away from home they go to a lodging-house, and if the parents look for them, the lodging-house keeper hides them. If a lad once gets into one of them it is all up with him, for he sees them drinking and card-playing, and hears them talking of the places they have been in. Young girls are enticed to the houses; many hundred lads would not go if it was not for them. I have seen nine beds in a room, and a lad and a wench in each. I was once in a lodging-house at Warwick, when there were 130 men, women, and children there, all loose characters.’

One felon states in his confession that —

‘Those who engage servants should be very particular with their characters, for often when a girl leaves her place she goes to a lodging-house, and there gets acquainted with thieves. She pays a shilling at the register-office, and gets a place, and is the tool of some person who
has

has got connected with her; and very often these women go on the 'servants' lark,' which is taking a place and only waiting until they have an opportunity of committing a robbery, or of giving information to those who will.'

Another delinquent says—

'I have known as many as forty or fifty regular prostitutes and thieves lying hickety-pickety in one lodging-house, many of them from different towns. They tell one another all they know. Bad wench enticing young lads from home to these houses make more thieves than aught else.'

Another prisoner says—

'Lodging-houses are a very great evil. I have known as many as ten men and ten women lying indiscriminately on the floor. A lad who has overrun his parents is sure of a home there; besides which, the lodging-house people try to get young girls from the factories to sleep there, which is a sure way of making their house.'

Having given a vast deal of similar evidence, the Commissioners state as follows:—

'We find that these receptacles are, in general, only visited or examined on the occasion of the pursuit of any particular offender; that they are nearly invariably unlicensed, and that the legal powers in respect to them are inadequate for the protection of the public.'

'We have received offers of extensive evidence of the demoralization carried into every part of the country by the streams of vagrants and mendicants. It has been stated in evidence, that by imposture, begging, and depredation, the various classes who frequent the unlicensed lodging-houses obtain more money with less labour than is obtainable by means of honest industry by a large proportion of labourers. Instances have been stated to us where travelling mechanics have been seduced from their occupations into the career of mendicancy from the temptations which it offers. Labourers have gone to the vagrants' lodging-houses to purchase, for their own use, the meat and refuse food which they could obtain there at a cheap rate.'

'Mr. Thomas Yates, a solicitor, after describing the increase of thefts and robberies in the town and neighbourhood of Llanfyllin, states,—"There are three lodging-houses for tramps, one of which is the most notorious house in the parish. The constables are frequently obliged to enter it, especially about fair times, in order to quell the disturbances and excesses created by tramps. This disorderly house is kept by a woman known by the name of 'Old Peggy.' She never lets a tramp go to bed without money, or money's-worth; and the broken victuals a tramp brings home is sold by her to poor persons who keep dogs, such as rat-catchers, &c. One man told Mr. D——, a druggist in the town, that for twopence 'Old Peggy' would give him scraps enough to keep his dog for a week or more. The druggist stated that 'Old Peggy' has often come to him, saying, 'God bless you, doctor, sell me a hap'orth o' tar.' When first applied to, he asked, 'What do you want with tar?' The reply was, 'Why, to make a land sailor. I want a hap'orth just

to daub a chap's canvass trousers with, and that's how I makes a land sailor, doctor."

'There are seven beer-shops in the town, besides nine public-houses. The serjeant-at-mace informed me that these beer-shops, as well as the public-houses, keep open all night, or as long as they have any customers whom they choose to serve with drink, and that neither he nor any of the other constables ever interfere with them, unless specially called upon, "as they do not like to inform upon a neighbour."

'The mischiefs of these migratory streams of depredators is not confined to the crimes which they commit, though those must be extremely extensive, to furnish such numerous hordes with the means of subsistence. These characters, experienced in the crimes and vices of the larger towns, form large proportions of the population of the gaols in the rural districts. The other inmates, chiefly agricultural labourers, confined for misdemeanours, may be considered pupils in these normal schools of crime.'

The Report teems with other proofs of the close alliance between vagrancy and felony; nor will we weaken the striking statements which we have laid before our readers by any comment of our own: but we hope to be forgiven for relating, on unquestionable authority, one story which shows the influence of the keepers of these houses, and the regular system on which the mendicant part of such establishments is conducted.

Mr. —, who resides in the West of England, had been so annoyed by troops of beggars, that he sent for the landlord of their house of accommodation, and told him that he would give him half a sovereign, if he would protect him from any more such visits that season, and show him his book. The man said that he would consider of it, and, after a while, returned and consented. The book contained a regular account of the roads and better class of houses and seats in the district, all being marked as *bad* or *good* according as they were liberal, or not, to beggars. The man received his ten shillings, and the donor was free from persecution for the remainder of that season; but next year Mr. — was harassed worse than ever. He sent for the landlord, and remonstrated; but the latter reminded him that the contract was only for freedom from importunity during the last season, and that it had been faithfully kept.

We will now suppose the circuit to be finished, and that the travellers, invigorated by the fine fresh air and their summer diet, are returned to head-quarters, and have resumed their town characters.

And here we must express a wish that those philanthropists who make it a practice to sally forth in the morning with half a pocketful of bright silver fourpences, which they dispense,
right

right and left, to every beggar or match-carrier whom they may meet, will, if this should meet their eye, reflect on the enormous mischief they are doing. If they would save their fourpences and *little shillings*, to provide themselves with tickets from the Mendicity Society, the case of every one to whom they might give a ticket would be carefully examined. If this will not induce them to hold their hands, let them remember that they are encouraging an offence: indeed the commissioners of police suggest that they should be treated accordingly. 'If,' say Colonel Rowan and Mr. Mayne, 'it be so desirable to put an end to street mendicity, and to treat it as a crime, the party who gives the money to a beggar should be considered guilty of an offence; for he gives encouragement to those committing the offence.'

There is one institution, 'the Refuge for the Houseless Poor,' that cannot, as it is at present conducted, be considered in any other light than as a most serious evil; and we say this reluctantly, for we are sure that the persons who patronise it have the best intentions. The objections to this institution do not apply to the Mendicity Society. Mr. Knevitt's examination shows the difference between the principles on which these two institutions are formed:—

'Do you think the relief afforded by the Mendicity Society has the effect, in ordinary seasons, of drawing beggars to the metropolis?—Decidedly not. It is not street mendicants and vagrants that will accept the work given them by the Mendicity Society.'

'Are you aware of the existence of an institution called the "Refuge for the Houseless?"—I am; they have now two establishments, one in the city, and one in Westminster.'

'The practice of that institution is, in the evening, to receive any persons who apply, to afford them shelter and a place for sleeping, and in the morning to discharge them with a small portion of food?—They receive them in the evening, when they oblige them to wash themselves, and they receive a portion of bread: they have different berths, parted off for each individual: in the morning he receives a slice of bread: they are then sent into the streets, both men and women.'

'Do not many old hardened beggars avail themselves of that institution?—I believe many come to London for the express purpose of getting shelter there in severe weather, and begging about the city in the daytime.'

The evidence of the commissioners of police confirms this latter statement in the clearest language:—

'It frequently happens in the places provided in different parts of the town as a Refuge for the Houseless Poor, that the police are, during the night and in the evening, directing to such houses those objects, and next morning the police have before them, assembled together, nearly the whole of the beggars, whom it becomes their business to apprehend individually in detail during the course of the day, if they are found begging

begging in the streets: they see them under the management of the society, while getting their faces washed, having a certain allowance of bread delivered out to them, and after having received such relief as the society will give them, starting off to their several beats to re-commence their operations of begging; and the police seeing them all start, it then becomes their duty to follow and watch for each individual beginning to beg, that he may take him into custody.

'Then, in fact, the Refuge for the Houseless Poor at present acts as a great encouragement to mendicity, since it gives them free quarters in which they rest for the night, and from which they proceed to pursue their trade by day?—Certainly, that is the effect.'

The following evidence will show the mode in which the Mendicity Society works practically. In the first place it appears that during the very rigorous winter of 1837-8, the number of applications at their Office was greatly increased. It was, in fact, larger than it even had been before; and the result of the society's efforts to meet such an emergency are well deserving of our attention. Mr. Knevitt is asked, with regard to this cloud of applicants,—

'Were you able adequately to meet their wants, or were you not obliged to relax the severity of your investigation to enable you to get through the cases?—We were.

'Did that relaxation encourage the resort of beggars to the metropolis; did it last so long as to have that effect?—No; they were, generally speaking, altogether a new class, men who had been frozen out of their work at the docks, and on the banks of the river; many were discharged for six weeks and two months by it; there was no work, and they could get no relief from their parishes in which they resided; when they applied they were told they did not belong to them.

'By the extraordinary exertions of the society on that occasion you were enabled to diminish a great amount of distress, and also to diminish the number of vagrants who would otherwise have been about the streets?—They must have been vagrants had they not been relieved by the society. *One Saturday we relieved nearly 1400 families in the day, and gave away 6000 meals.*

'You do not consider the society, even in the most inclement weather, is open to the charge of undertaking an office which they cannot adequately discharge?—Decidedly not.

'You are enabled to do that, I conclude, by the benefactions of the public increasing in proportion to the application you make?—I always find an appeal to the public has been responded to during the five years I have belonged to the office.'

This exhibits the powers of the society when exerted in the time of unusual pressure, and in the aggregate. Let us now see how they operate when applied to individual cases. A charitable donation, unless it be very considerable, does not alter the position of the person who receives it. The money is spent, and the re-

applicant remains just in the state in which the donation found him. But if the means of regaining his position in society, or of raising himself from utter destitution to the independence of honestly earning his bread, be given to the unfortunate, the work is a work of true charity: it is also a work of true policy; for it makes a good citizen of one who, in his despair, may be tempted to become a felon. Let us look at a few cases, taken almost at random, in which the society have succeeded in this way:—

‘W. H. M., a single young man, twenty-three years of age, applied to this society for relief, in a most destitute and starving condition. It appeared, upon inquiry, that his father had been transported while applicant was but a child; an asylum was therefore provided for the latter in that excellent institution, the Philanthropic, where he conducted himself with so much propriety as to entitle himself to gratuities on two different occasions, of some amount. While there, he had acquired a knowledge of the printing business, and, on completing his apprenticeship, obtained employment as a journeyman, whereby he had supported himself in comfort and respect, until thrown out of employment by the failure of his master and subsequent illness, which ultimately reduced him to such a state of destitution, that he was without a home, or the means of support, and committed to prison, at the instance of the police, as a vagrant. On his liberation he applied to this society for relief; and his character appearing, upon inquiry, unexceptionable, he was not only respectably clothed at the society’s expense, but also provided with employment at the establishment of a highly respectable firm, where, it was afterwards ascertained, his conduct was most satisfactory to his employer, and there is good reason to believe that he will have constant work at good wages.’

‘M. W., a native of Oxfordshire, with a wife and six children dependent, applied by ticket for relief in very great distress, to which he had been brought by an accident which had deprived him of the means of obtaining his livelihood. Upon inquiry, it appeared that he had for many years supported his large family solely by his own industry, in carrying goods by means of a horse and cart for different respectable tradespeople about the metropolis; but that while so engaged in the city, his horse was killed through the negligence of the driver of an omnibus, and his vehicle so injured as to require considerable repair before it could be again fit for use. The occurrence having taken place at night, amidst the confusion incidental to such an event, the guilty party escaped, and, consequently, the unfortunate applicant was unable to procure any remuneration for his losses. His character, however, proving unexceptionable, the Society afforded him temporary relief until an opportunity was afforded of appealing to his parish, from which a small sum of money was, however, procured; and the Society thereupon made up sufficient from its own and private funds, placed at its disposal, to enable the applicant to purchase another horse, and part for the necessary repairs of his cart, thus placing him in a way of again maintaining

maintaining his family, which, it is gratifying to learn, he has since succeeded in doing !

‘ W. R., a native of Devonshire, 45 years of age, having a wife and three children dependent, who had for many years maintained his family by the sale of wood about the streets of London, appealed to the Society for relief, in consequence of having been compelled to make away with almost every thing he possessed, including a wheelbarrow in which he was accustomed to carry the wood he had for sale, until himself and family were almost reduced to starvation. It appearing, upon inquiry, that the character of the applicant was unblemished, and that his distress had arisen solely from an illness with which he had been afflicted for many months, assistance was afforded him by the Society to purchase another wheelbarrow, and stock of wood, with which he recommenced his former occupation, with a very favourable prospect of success.’

We must now turn to the less agreeable, but not less necessary portion of the Society’s labours, and exhibit some cases of detected and punished fraud.

‘ C. S., a single young woman of creditable appearance, 21 years of age, who represented that she had formerly been in service, but was reduced by a combination of unfortunate events to the necessity of seeking a livelihood by singing about the streets, notwithstanding she had been respectably brought up, was referred to this Society for relief by one of its subscribers. She further stated, that she was living in Essex-street, Whitechapel; but, upon inquiry there, no such person could be found, which was easily accounted for afterwards, inasmuch as it appeared that, although she had previously lived in that street, it was under an assumed name, and as the wife of a man with whom she had long cohabited; and that, at the time of her application to this Society, she was living with him within a short distance of the Society’s office; and it further appearing that he was in constant work as a picture-frame maker, whereby he earned 20s. per week, no assistance was therefore afforded her, except what was advanced previous to the merits of her case being inquired into.

‘ J. F., a native of Ireland, 40 years of age, and of particularly strong and healthy appearance, who had been long known to this Society as a common impostor, was apprehended in King-street, St. James’s, in company with a woman whom he pretended to be his wife, and two decently attired children. From their appearance, and the tale they told, strangers would be induced to suppose that they had but just arrived in London in search of employment, but that the woman had been taken suddenly ill, from mere exhaustion, and that they were in a state of total destitution. This artifice the man pursued in various parts of the metropolis, frequently with different women; and when apprehended, which they had been several times, resisted the officers most violently. On being searched, he was always found to have a considerable sum of money about his person. The magistrates before whom they were taken committed both the man and woman to the House of Correction.

‘ J. D. S., a man of colour, and a native of Bengal, who had been

known to the Society's officers many years, and by whom he had been apprehended no less than eighteen times, was again taken into custody by one of them, begging in Leather-lane, apparently in a state of extreme misery and destitution, indeed almost in a state of nudity; it will, however, be scarcely credited, that so far from being in distress, he was well known to be, and admitted that he was, the landlord of two lodging-houses in St. Giles's, which yielded him ample means of support; and when apprehended, upon being searched, no less a sum than 18s. 1d. was found upon his person; and upon a similar occasion, which occurred previously, as much as £9 was found sewn up in his tattered garments. Upon being made acquainted with these facts, the magistrates again committed him to prison. This case fully exemplifies the imutility of relieving street beggars with money without previous inquiry at this Society's office, where most of the notorious impostors are known, and will account in a great measure for the frequent refusal of the Society's tickets when offered, as those persons really in want of assistance readily accept of them; but on the other hand, the practised and indolent beggars are well aware that their real character and circumstances are not likely to escape exposure, from the rigid inquiry instituted by the Society previous to any material assistance being afforded them. It is deemed useful to add a description of this impostor, who, as before observed, is a black man, forty-five years of age, with a mole in his right eye, and is about five feet five inches in height.

The worthy magistrates, before whom one Mrs. Trigge was brought, appear to have executed a sort of poetical justice on the offender:—

'No. 31,773.—Alice Trigge, a woman of creditable appearance, was apprehended under the following circumstances:—During the last summer, this woman called upon a lady in Bedford Square, stating she was in an advanced state of pregnancy, and soliciting an order for admission into the Lying-in Hospital. While relating her tale, she appeared to be suddenly taken in the pangs of labour, which caused so much alarm to the inmates of the house, that a cabriolet was instantly sent for, the applicant carefully assisted into it, 10s. given her, and the driver directed to proceed forthwith to the Hospital. On the cab reaching a gin-shop in the vicinity of Oxford Street, she jumped out, and invited the driver to partake of some gin, at the same time boasting of the trick she had played off on the ladies. These facts being completely proved in evidence, and also that she was an old impostor, the magistrates committed her to hard labour in the House of Correction for three months.'

Enough of this catalogue of low vice; and, indeed, we fear that we have already wearied the eye with these dark but true pictures. We must, however, caution the public against the foreign practitioners whom the rapidity of steam communication—(who would be encumbered with wings?)—now pours upon our shores. This may meet the eye of more than one gentleman who has been accosted as he was leaving his club, by some person inquiring either

either in French, or Italian, or German—the two former for choice—whether he can inform the applicant if he knows who can speak those languages? If, unfortunately, he answers the querist, he will find that the latter, according to his own account, is either a captain or mate who has lost his ship, or a person of condition reduced to the sad necessity of doing what is odious to him. These persons also frequent the watering-places, Brighton especially. Then there is another mode of attack. A well-written letter is handed in, stating that the writer, a literary foreigner, has, in the extremity of his distress, been obliged to pawn a valuable work for a very small sum, enclosing the ticket of a pawnbroker who lives at a distance. This application is generally made on a Sunday.

We here close this melancholy catalogue. And though the task has been an unpleasant one, we trust that we may have assisted in opening the eyes of those who may have the will and the power to put down this crying evil of vagrancy. The disease requires prompt and vigorous remedies, not palliatives. ‘A little slumber, a little sleep, a little folding of the hands to sleep,’—there has been too much of this. If those who *can* stem this torrent will not arouse themselves, let them not be surprised if, in no short period of time, they find that they have to contend with more than one Iru at the gate.

But what are the remedies?

As regards our private conduct as individuals, the most obvious remedy is to be found in giving the utmost support to such institutions as that of which we have been quoting the Reports—the invaluable MENDICITY SOCIETY OF LONDON—in every affluent person’s considering it as a point of clear and urgent duty, not to give money in the streets—but *tickets*, which will ensure attention to the case, and relief, if relief be really required;—but, as regards the government of the country, the great and only remedy lies in the establishment of a vigilant, efficient, responsible police. It is, doubtless, very captivating to be eloquent upon self-government and the glorious days of Alfred; but we hope that the suppression and punishment of vagrants and felons will not, even in these days of sympathy with offenders, be considered as very much infringing the liberty of the subject.

- ART. V.—1. Αἰσχύλου Ἀγαμέμνων. *The Agamemnon of Æschylus, with notes critical, explanatory, and philological.* By the Rev. T. W. Peile, M.A., etc. London, 1839.
2. [*Bibliotheca Græca, curantibus F. Jacobs et V. C. F. Rost.*] *Æschyli Tragædiarum*, vol. i. *Orestea*: Sectio 1, *Agamemno*. Edidit Dr. R. H. Klausen. Gothæ et Erfordiar, 1833.
3. *Theologumena Æschyli Tragicæ*. Exhibuit R. H. Phil. Dr. Berolini, 1829.

SINCE the appearance of Bishop Blomfield's edition of the *Agamemnon* (see *Quarterly Review*, No. L.), little has been done in England for Æschylus: for this play almost nothing, except in the metrical versions of Kennedy, Harford, and Simmons: none of which, we fear, can be compared with the German translation of Wilhelm von Humboldt.* This remarkable man, though he often abuses the flexibility of his language so far as to translate a difficult passage and retain the whole difficulty, has entered with true poetic feeling into the spirit of his author: and his metrical version of the *Agamemnon* is, as could not but be expected from his name, truly valuable. Professor Scholefield has indeed produced a readable and convenient edition: but it has been by adhering almost servilely to the text of Wellauer. It has been the fashion to praise this latter scholar's Æschylus very highly: and certainly he has *undone* a great deal of the mischief done by those whom the Germans (with some reason) nickname *Porsonunculi*. But he was a rude and surly dogmatist, without the accuracy which might have induced us to submit to him. (See the proof of this in the *Museum Philologicum*, vol. i. p. 229, sq.) And he lived long enough to write to Hermann, expressing his regret for having undertaken such a work so crudely, and stating that he was resolved (had he lived to publish a second edition) to recant much which had disfigured his first. (Hermann's *Opuscula*, vol. vi. part ii. p. 22, sq.) There is also an edition by C. G. Haupt, which contains much that is valuable, especially the learned notes of Spanheim: but it is disgracefully incorrect in typography. Schneider's small edition with German notes we have not seen.

Additional value is given to Humboldt's translation by an appendix of corrected readings, the work of the patriarch of modern scholars, Godfrey Hermann of Leipzig. This venerable man has long outlived the freaks which brought him under the lash of Porson; and has devoted, throughout an extended life, a high

* Voss's, which Kennedy adopts, does not bear so good a character. Droysen's, we believe, is highly spoken of.

genius to the pursuits of classical literature. His pre-eminence cannot be disputed: pity only it is that he wishes to reign like the Turk, with no brother near the throne; and declares war against all and sundry who will not join his party, *addicti jurare in verba magistri*.

Our readers may smile at the use of such a word as *party*, in connexion with the dead languages and their literature. *Political England* has far other excitements.* But so it is, that the fiery energies of the German have not the same vents as ours. A strange medley of solid matter and muddy froth,—in some respects phlegmatic and heavy,—yet with his head full of that ‘empire of the air’ which Madame de Staël assigns to him, to balance the French empire of the earth and the English of the water,—he needs, beyond all others, a pursuit in which patience can be united with enthusiasm. In youth, his *perfervidum ingenium* shows itself in his wild and unkempt person, his *renownings*, and his duels. But he leaves the university: the political arena is comparatively closed,—commerce there is little;—literature becomes his active life—and that, too, in those especial departments which are farthest removed from the active life of others,—pure literature, moral and intellectual science, speculative theology, and that which (according to Mr. Donaldson, in his very valuable but rather eccentric work *The New Cratylus*) comprehends theology under it,—*philology*. Into these they fling themselves, as they do everything, with heart and soul; and they quarrel as loudly, abuse each other as roundly, ‘throw their brains about’ as much, identify themselves as completely with the cause they espouse, as the editors of English newspapers do with Lord Durham or Sir F. Head, Lord Brougham’s letter to ‘Dear John Russell,’ or his assault on the *resigned* administration. Happy nation, which can afford to disquiet itself about conflicting schools of abstract philosophy, about the date of a Greek inscription, or the number of a Greek chorus! Happy rulers, if *young Germany* can be prevailed upon to follow the example of its ancestors, to shed ink for blood, and to smoke over the wrecks of the past and the visions of the possible, without an attempt to realise their nebulous ideas in the present!

These are circumstances which cannot but have influence on the phenomenon of German literature in general, and especially as connected with the classics. And hence the bickerings and the hot spirit with which they carry on controversies on subjects which, we fear, may seem to most of our readers cold enough. *Parties*, then, in reference to classical literature, Germany has at present two: one, which may be called the *critical* school, that
of

of Hermann and his followers; the other of the *Archæologists*,* 'the upstart race,' of which the heroes are A. Boeckh of Berlin, K. O. Mueller and the late lamented L. Dissen of Goettingen, and F. G. Welcker of Bonn. The name of B. G. Niebuhr has been also claimed as belonging to them: and certainly, if they were all that they wish and pretend to be, there would be some ground for the claim: but it is most presumptuous on their parts, and most unfair to the memory of that great and amiable man, to associate him with a polemical party, or with any of those petty literary jealousies above which he soared so high.

Hermann and his friends stand upon the old paths of criticism and philology, asserting especially the importance of minute verbal and grammatical nicety. And whenever an errant knight of the new school has sallied forth, the veteran Godfrey, ready as his namesake of old, has met him in the field, like the champion of some Castle Perilous bound to do battle against all comers. The old hero watches with grim jealousy over the realm which for half a century has been his, and shows no little indignation at such as enter it without acknowledgment of his authority. And yet it is in no slight degree Hermann himself who has given an impulse to the minds of his countrymen, and breathed life into their philological researches. He is no mere word-catcher, none of those—

γωνιοβόμβυκες, μονοσύλλαβοι, οἷσι μέμηλε
τό σφιν καὶ τὸ σφῶν, καὶ τό μιν ἡδὲ τό νιν,—

but a ripe and good scholar, whose literary studies have enriched a profound philosophical mind; while the general character of his emendations on Æschylus bespeaks not only acuteness and accuracy, but a poetical spirit of no ordinary power. Witness such emendations as that on Chœphi. v. 423, &c. ἔκοφα κόμμον, κ.τ.ε. in his Opusc. iv. p. 338, vii. p. 59. However, if in any measure Hermann has assisted at the hatching of this new race, no hen among her first brood of ducklings is more puzzled by the antics of her progeny; and his resistance to every effort they make, and the unmeasured language which he uses himself and encourages in his pupils against them, are felt as indications of personal hostility, and met in the same spirit. The last paper of his that has come to our knowledge fairly announces that 'as long as Ritter Mueller goes on talking nonsense about Æschylus, so long will he (Hermann) go on, in spite of weariness, to prove it nonsense.'

* Strictly, according to their pretensions, 'the historico-antiquario-archæologico-philosophico-æsthetic (or perfect) school:' a definition to which nothing can be objected except—its inapplicability.—See Herm. Opusc., vol. vii. p. 26.

The school referred to has done more for philology than any other in modern times ; for it has opened a new mine of illustration. Its most valuable characteristic is to deal with things rather than words—to enter into the full meaning of the ancients, rather than to dabble with what its supporters have called, contemptuously enough, *note-learning*. They bring all the stores of immense reading, as well as an extensive acquaintance with ancient art, to bear on any given classical subject. But they most pride themselves on a talent for combination, which works up the scattered hints of various authors into a full and perfect form, with more than German industry and ingenuity. And in the full confidence of their infallibility, whether collectively as a council, or separately as popes, they aim at forming a sort of joint-dictatorship over the public mind, leaguely to maintain each the other's crotchets, and asserting the certainty of every theory or opinion which may from time to time be enunciated by one or other of the initiated *archæologists*. They are thus often rash, always overweening : always ready to believe each other, to disbelieve all beside : ‘κοινὰ τὰ τῶν φίλων (says the caustic Hermann, *Opusc.* vol. v. p. 15) : quodque unus excogitavit, credunt sodales : *ita novæ antiquitates proceduntur.*’ This forms, in fact, the key to the whole quarrel. They look upon the critical school with undisguised contempt, branding them with epithets which would have better applied to the times of Dutch supremacy, before Heyne led philologists on to something beyond mere heavy pioneering.* Mueller somewhere in his ‘*Eumenides*’ talks most arrogantly about questions being now asked, which mere ‘note-learning’ is incompetent to answer, and which, consequently, must be left for his own school. The critics expose in return the crudity and rashness of their conjectures, the continual blunders and recantations which ensue, and their absurd readiness to reconstruct new theories the very moment some unlucky authority which they had overlooked has upset their old ones. It is clear that both styles of scholarship are needed. Of course a finished scholar ought to unite the excellencies of both. Like the lame man and the blind in the epigram, they ought to make an alliance : and then the seven-leagued boot of the archæologist might march rapidly forward, assured against all perils of hedge or ditch by the keen eyes of the critic. But as long as they are pitted against each other,

* Not that, on the one hand, this pioneering is unnecessary in the first place : nor yet, on the other, that Heyne himself deserves high credit for his philological attainments (see *Lebensnachrichten* von B. G. Niebuhr, vol. ii. p. 147) :—but he certainly showed the way to something more advanced.

it must be confessed that much may be said not only *for*, but *against* both sides. No man has yet, to the best of our belief, thoroughly united both systems. Boeckh is the deepest critic of the New School : but he is in the same proportion deficient in some of its more peculiar accomplishments. Mueller has attempted very little as an *Editor* of the *Eumenides* ; and in that little we cannot help thinking that he has signally failed :—Hermann's review settles that portion of his claims. As an *Illustrator*, he is always in more danger than others of going wrong, because he takes in so much wider a field : and his conclusions are often absurdly disproportioned to his premises ; but in the power of bringing together scattered morsels of information, in the genius which groups these fragments, and sees at a glance in what connexion they are to be used, in the almost prophetic eye which realises the form of the future structure long before the materials are complete, Mueller, with all his hyper-Teutonic eccentricity, is far above the attacks of Hermann. Were we even to grant that he was wrong in every one of his conclusions, we might yet maintain that the book was a most precious one, as containing the germ of a future system of scholarship, equally spirited and more chastised. The critics are seldom so absurd as the archæologists : the archæologists never so dull as the critics. The one will perhaps preserve their own dignity better : the other will do more to benefit the reader. Meanwhile we are reaping some advantage from the dispute : for Mueller's edition of the *Eumenides*, and Hermann's elaborate review of it in the *Wiener Jahrbuecher*, throw more light on the *Orestean Trilogy* than all the earlier commentators together. And thus we come to the works named at the head of our article.

The edition of the *Agamemnon* placed first on the list is by Mr. Peile, one of the tutors of the University of Durham, a scholar of high distinction at Cambridge, where he was a fellow of Trinity College : we need not say more. He takes his stand very decidedly on the old critical, philological, and grammatical ground : his work contains a mass of very valuable matter in these departments ; and he has had the advantage of the MSS. of the learned Bishop of Lichfield, who, we conclude, has abandoned his cherished design of re-editing *Æschylus*. In most pages the initials 'S. L.' occupy a place honourable alike to the master and his pupil.

The second is by Dr. R. H. Klausen of Bonn, a disciple of the new school, though he is not without a certain heaviness which rather belongs to the old one. His little treatise on the '*Theologumena*' of *Æschylus* is sadly ponderous : bearing indeed the stamp

stamp of indomitable labour in the accumulation of facts and quotations; but, we conceive, put together under a wholly erroneous impression of the real character and creed of the poet, which will be discussed more at large below. But his '*Agamemnon*' shows his talents to much greater advantage. We are not aware of any one, certainly not excepting Mr. Peile, who has in the same manner entered into the spirit, and laboured to unravel the thoughts, of his author. Our editions of *Æschylus* in general might just as well be mere dictionaries of words and phrases. Blomfield's, with all its value, is nothing more: Butler's is, perhaps, less exclusively so; but then, what an unsathomable book did Butler's *Æschylus* become under the conditions to which its editor was subjected! The critical value of these editions has been now so long past, that the less said on the subject the better: nor could we augur well for Mr. Peile's judgment, when we found him in his preface placing Klausen '*perhaps next to the present Bishop of London, whose name must needs stand foremost in connexion with that of Æschylus.*' This is more than sand-blindness, it is the 'high gravel-blindness' of national feeling,—*λημῆ κολοῦντας*. The value of Bishop Blomfield's Glossary is very great indeed: and glad should we be to see such a *Lexicon Æschyleum* completed and thrown into an alphabetical form. The excellence of some of his conjectures we should be very sorry to deny. But we fear that few pages of his text will stand a comparison with that of *Æschylus* in Dindorf's *Poetæ Græcorum Scenici*.*

It must be confessed that Klausen is very often wild and absurd: and, in particular, that he labours under the monomania of thinking everything easy to construe. He would read a newspaper through crosswise from column to column, without remarking more than a certain *depth* of style. He has got hold of the true key to most of his author's difficulties—the *sequence of the thoughts, when the construction of the words is irregular*: but like a child with a new plaything, he wears it out by trying it on everything that comes in his way. Keys are very useful things for opening locks; but they have not quite so much influence on stone walls. Hence it would be easy to collect a long string of ridiculous passages from his notes (cf. v. 114): but to do so would be to give an utterly false impression of the value of his work. The fact is, that a German, especially if possessed of genius, always has an idiosyncrasy of a most perplexing kind: and in particular the nation seems—(as indeed Goethe con-

* Not that we hold up this as a perfect text: but it is one which ought to teach young scholars to endeavour to dive into the meaning of the readings of MSS., and not to correct (save the mark!) all that they find difficult. For the sake of uniformity, our references to *Æschylus* will be made according to this edition.

fesses in his remarks on 'Don Juan')—utterly devoid of that sense of the ludicrous which keeps eccentricity in check through fear of ridicule, in things where ridicule is a fair test. Let a German aim at fun, and he will run riot in unbridled skittishness; but whenever he is in earnest, he is *so much* in earnest that his every idea is invested, in his own eyes, with the same seriousness: nor can he comprehend how others are to see anything ludicrous in that which he has thought of gravely. To such an extreme is this carried, that one is sometimes led to doubt whether it be the *hypsos* of solemn Cervantic drollery, or the *bathos* of pure, unsophisticated, unconscious *bonhomme*. To take an instance from a volume now before us, written by a pupil of Mueller—(Schoell's *Beitraege zur Kenntniss der Griechischen Tragœdie*)—who can say whether Herr Schoell is in jest or earnest when he tells us that the *Proteus* (the fourth play of the *Oresteia*) was not a regular satyric drama, but a playful *réchauffé* of the three tragedies preceding, founded on the visit of Menelaus to Proteus in the *Odyssey*; and that, therefore, 'the chorus could not be of satyrs. *But might it not consist of sea-calves?* These ugly, cunning creatures might be represented as furious against all intruders, until Eidothea perhaps finally cajoled and appeased them. Would not this form a naïve and enjoyable parody on the propitiation of the Eumenides by Athena?' (vol. i. p. 17.) Shade of Aristophanes!—Shade of Jonathan Oldbuck! *A dance of salvage seals* in a play of *Æschylus*, and that play not even satyric! And is all the poet's art exhausted—are all the powers of earth, and heaven, and hell brought together in one tragic group,—

'ut turpiter atrum

Desinat in piscem,'—

to wind up with Menelaus *playing at hide and seek with a chorus of phocæ!*

To one portion of an editor's duty, frequently much neglected, Klausen has paid especial attention. The rule has usually been, 'Take care of the words, and the sentences will take care of themselves:' or at most to attempt to master the sentences singly, without tracing their mutual connexion. Many editions of the classics are the mere outpourings of an editor's commonplace book—scraps hung with more or less success on the pegs afforded by an author's language, rather than the results of an actual endeavour to illustrate him. Such works are read more advantageously by studying the notes, and from time to time referring to the text, than by the reverse method. What then can be their object? Clearly not an acquaintance with this poet, or that philosopher: but simply a knowledge of the usages of a language.

We

We have an anatomical lecture on a finger or a toe: but it might as well have belonged to any other individual as to the actual subject; and if so, how utterly does the man himself disappear, when even the dead body, as it were, loses its identity? We have seen some such books, wherein the notes might have been mere slips cut with the scissors out of a grammar and a dictionary, *minus* the philosophical arrangement of the one, or the alphabetical of the other. Now such labours are unquestionably important. But is this to edit an ancient author? We humbly think not. And though, unfortunately, editions of the classics are the only vehicles (medically speaking) in which such lucubrations are likely to be gulped down, yet it seems but reasonable to demand that, if youths must swallow bitter draughts of scholarship the noblest works of uninspired genius may not be associated for ever in their memories with the abomination.

Klausen—though far from being free from long-winded disquisitions of this kind—has attempted something much more to the purpose. He is careful to elucidate the trains of thought as they arise in the mind of the poet, and the plot as furthered or modified by each step in the play. He has, in short, endeavoured everywhere to enter into not only the words, but the very mind of *Æschylus*; and holding by the thread of that one leading idea, round which, in his poetry, everything clusters and crystallises, he strives to give, not the deep intonations of dead sounds, but ‘the thoughts that breathe and words that burn,’ even as they were drunk in by an audience on whom no delicacy of allusion, no brilliance of poetry, no harmonious adjustment of parts was lost.

Surely this is the spirit in which we should approach remains so precious:—not to cut and to slash them, though we may flatter ourselves that we are carving a dish fit for the gods; not ‘to peep and botanise’ about them, to settle the relative claims of $\tau\epsilon$ and $\delta\epsilon$ —to refer this epithet or that derivative to its technical pigeon-hole in some grammarian’s cabinet; much less to smother them in onions, to overlay the poet’s pages with ell-long quotations from every worse author than himself, who has used the same words in the same, or perhaps in a different sense, or has caught and caged a notion of *Æschylus*, which must be infinitely surprised to find itself in the company of his own. To such misconceived duties our English *eruditi* have been apt to devote themselves with resolution worthy of a better cause. And we regret to say that our delight in hailing such a work as Mr. Peile’s was seriously damped by the discovery that, while his sound scholarship, unwearied diligence, and critical acumen made his volume a valuable storehouse, he had increased instead of lessening the evil

evil of which we complain, from a want of poetical taste and feeling.* Nay, objections to the book occur even before opening it. Let any one look at the square inches of the volume! The brazen bowels of Didymus himself would be unequal to its digestion. What can possibly compensate for the substantial evil of four hundred and fifteen pages, whereof three hundred and thirty-four are of closely-printed notes—

‘Scriptus et in tergo, necdum finitus *Orestes*?’

This comes of the ‘fatal facility’ of *English* note-writing! English is as unfit for notes, as Latin is for lexicography. Latin is in itself the language for notes; and there are, besides, extrinsic advantages: Latin notes, for instance, must be terse:—here is one check to prolixity: Latin notes cost most men a good deal of trouble:—here is another. Dr. Arnold and Mr. Mitchell have much, in many ways, to answer for, in giving the sanction of their high names to an example so fruitful in bad effects.† We cannot but fear that great evil will result from it to the scholarship of this country, at a time when we need every exertion to maintain a respectable place in the field of classical literature.

Of course, our meaning is not that, because Æschylus ought to be admired, he ought not to be expounded and interpreted. We are not anxious to have him wondered at in a clasped volume. His words must be explained, his idioms illustrated, his grammatical niceties enucleated. Above all, the highest critical skill is requisite to supply the lamentable want of materials for a perfect text. We cannot do without critical editions of Æschylus; and we trust to see one such from Hermann himself, and one from the English scholar who reviewed Scholefield’s Æschylus in the Philological Museum, before many years expire. But let these labours be kept in some measure distinct; as indeed in many editions is done, in a way which practically confesses the inconvenience of indiscriminate annotation. The philological notes ought always to be such as to show that they are intended really to assist the reader in the study of the author. We would fain see an edition of Æschylus to which ‘*Pars minima est ipse*

* Strikingly evinced, we think, in his choice of interpretations in many of the most beautiful portions of choruses; and not less so in the vulgar language in which he sometimes allows himself to translate Æschylus. See the notes on vv. 39, 51, 118, 148 (does he know the meaning of *Wrath*?), 173, 183, 821, 406, 546, 678, 705 note p, and fifty other places, where he is only absurd; on vv. 695 and 811 note m, he deserves more severe blame. By the way, when he prefixed ‘*Quæ expedit psittaco suum χαίρει*’ to the well-deserved dedication, did he see that he was placing the excellent Bishop of Lichfield in a ludicrous light in connexion with the *magister artium* of Persius? And then the *purpureæ panni* in the preface!

† We regret most sincerely to have to make any deduction from the general praise so justly due to Mr. Mitchell’s annotated text of Aristophanes.

poeta sui' would not be applicable; where each portion of the editor's labours should be strictly adapted and subordinated to the object of bringing out THE POET, unravelling his conceptions, and throwing light upon his ideas. Materials there are in abundance, thanks to those who have gone before, for bringing all the verbal illustrations into a small compass. A single, but very appropriate, example of the use of a word or phrase, selected, if possible, from himself, or if not, from those nearest him in character and position, would always be preferable to accumulated learning; and the books should be referred to, which are best calculated to help the student, if he wishes to carry any investigation further. Of course, all points which gain light from general history, or from the poet's own life, should be touched upon, but very briefly; and any longer discussions ought to be interwoven in an essay upon the general scope and the adjuncts of each particular play, to be read and digested before commencing the text.* And in everything alike the one aim and object should be the elucidation of the author's thoughts through that master-science in which grammar, and logic, and poetry combine to make language an adequate expression of the heights and depths of man's inward nature. Then *Æschylus* would speak, not as the poet of Athens or of Greece alone, a tongue foreign to our ears, as though a mummy were to cry from out its cerements; but we should hear him and look upon him as the *sacer vates*, the *interpretes deorum*, whose appeal is to the hearts of all his brethren, whose language is the language of them all. In this way his poetry would come in upon our souls, not as the faint echo of an inarticulate voice where we can only recognise the melody, but as clothing truths the most profound in a garb the most winning; and it would work upon us till we dreamed that ourselves had felt originally and independently those high thoughts and imaginings, which were but the responses of a soul attuned to his.

For if ever there was a poet filled with the deep sense of the sacred nature and duties of his calling, as the teacher of religion and of all virtue as therewith connected, *Æschylus* was he. And this it is which—to all such as have studied him earnestly, and truly laboured to drink of his sealed fountains—gives a character to his poetry nothing less than awful. We may well conceive *Sophocles* and *Euripides* to have sung in a joyous or a pensive mood, to give vent to the one feeling, or to soothe the other; but always so, as that it rested in their own choice to sing or not,

* In this Mueller has set a good example; but has (as usual) gone too far, in throwing everything into this form. Even a translation does not supersede the necessity of running notes on minute points; only they ought to be themselves proportionably minute.

and that their choice was regulated by their own inclinations. But a spirit is upon Æschylus, not to be resisted, not to be controlled; the fire kindles, and he speaks with his tongue—

— ἐμπέδως
 δαῖγμα πρῶστατήριον
 καρδίας τερασκόπον ποτᾶται,
 μαντιπολεῖ δ' ἀκέλευτος, ἄμισθος δαίδα.—(Agam. v. 975.)

He was a POET indeed; and the more so, in that his character was one which did not rest in the poetical as an end, but was ever looking forward to objects and duties external to himself and beyond the pleasurable exercise of his own powers, to which his whole inward being was to be devoted,—even the inculcation of truth severe and sacred duty. And a sketch of such points as are certain in his life will show that the times in which his spirit grew—at first in silence and in shade, afterwards amidst action and turmoil, through evil report and good report, in prosperity and disappointment—were such as to act with especial force on such a temperament, and to work, even when most adverse, and to the last, towards the development and perfection of his character.

THE birth of Æschylus is fixed in the year B.C. 525, eleven years after the invention by Thespis of that which soon became tragedy, and two years after the death of Peisistratus; when Athens, under the peaceful, economical, and happy sway of the 'tyrant' Hippias, was the seat of all the arts of Greece, the resort of Lasus, of Anacreon, and of Simonides. During his boyhood followed in rapid succession the murder (things must be called by their right names) of Hipparchus by Harmodius and Aristogeiton, who (unless an old song is better authority than an old almanack) did not kill the tyrant, nor restore liberty and law to Athens,*—the consequent jealousies and cruelties of the actual sovereign Hippias,—and the final expulsion of the Peisistratids.

He was a young man of four-and-twenty when the siege of Naxos led to the revolt of Aristagoras and the Ionians: which again, within a couple of years, brought the Athenians into actual contact with the Persian forces at Sardis—'barbariæ lento collisa duello;' *lento* indeed—which lingered, but without intermission of purpose on the Persian side, until the invasions by Darius and Xerxes, and thence was transmitted onwards until a man of Macedon put an end at once to it and the empire of the Asiatics. Amidst such events did he make his first effort as a dramatic writer, as the rival of Pratinas and Chœrilus. Then followed the 'Taking of Miletus,' a tragedy of real life, memorable as having

* See the deliberate judgment of Thucydides, vi. 53, 54, sqq.

proved, in the hands of the pathetic *Phrynichus*, too keenly painful for dramatic interest. And swift as the thunder-clouds did the storm gather over Greece. Once the winds and the waves fought against Persia—'afflavit Deus et dissipantur':—Athoan Zeus from the frontier height of *Hellas* looked down on the baffled aliens. And once, when it was still fondly deemed that

'Never man could stem the torrent driving wildly from afar,
Never might of sturdiest bulwark stay the surging tide of war,'

(*Pers.* v. 87.)

the tide was rolled back from the little plain of *Marathon*; and the barrow of those who died there was a bulwark to their brethren,—an altar* at whose holy fire the love of father-land was kindled and handed down from age to age,—a mighty spell which even in degenerate days could avail to call up the ghost of *Athenian* spirit.

For some years past we have heard nothing of *Æschylus* as a poet: but we may be well assured that he was completing his poetical education; and here at *Marathon* he appears again in his place as one, and not the least distinguished, of the bright band who saved their country. His first prize in the theatre was six years after his glory at *Marathon*, four years before the climax of the international struggle—the death-grapples of *Thermopylæ* and *Salamis*. Here again, and in the next year at *Platæa*, he fought; and in B.C. 472, at the age of fifty-four, he produced the play which commemorates the contest, *The Persians*, forming, with the *Phineus* and the *Glaucus*, a trilogy which *Welcker*† ingeniously unites as illustrating the one idea of Greece triumphant over Asia, in the *Argonautic* expedition, the battle of *Salamis*, and the victory of *Syracuse* over the *Phœnicians* of *Carthage*. In B.C. 468, *Sophocles*, then twenty-seven years of age, carried away the tragic prize from *Æschylus*; and from this time we know nothing certainly of his life for ten years, until B.C. 458, when, just two years before his death, he produced *The Orestea*, or trilogy of connected dramas on the subject of *Orestes*,—the most perfect specimen of the ancient stage, without which we should have as little conception of the difficulties, the capabilities, and the consummate artistic finish of the *Attic* tragedy, as we should possess of the epics, had *Homer* come down to us in fragments.

It is doubtful whether *Æschylus* was at *Athens* when the *Orestea* was performed, or not. On the one hand, we know that the poet was usually his own *χοροδιδάσκαλος* (chorus, ballet, and

* Compare the Ode of *Simonides* on those who died at *Thermopylæ*.—(ix. p. 10 Ed. *Schneid.*)

† 'Die *Æschyleische* Trilogie u. s. w.,' pp. 470-81; but the theory is precarious, as depending on a correction of *Glaucus*—*Πόντιος* for *Ποτνιός*.

rehearsal master), and in that capacity only, not as poet, was mentioned in the choragic inscription: see, the *Museum Criticum* (vol. ii. p. 87) for an example. On the other, it is certain that Æschylus retired from Athens, upon some disgust or other, to spend the latter part of his life in Sicily; and Sicilian words are quoted from this trilogy to prove that it was written there. But here we are in a perplexity. There is fair authority for saying that he went to the court of Hiero of Syracuse, and wrote a tragedy called *Ætna*, or *The Women of Ætna*, in honour of his newly-founded city. Now, Hiero died B.C. 467; and Sicilian words are found also in the earlier plays. (Cf. Blomf. Gloss. Prom. V. v. 277.) Nay, in the *Prometheus* (vv. 365—372) we have a description of the recent eruption of Mount Ætna. We must therefore suppose him to have revisited his country at intervals, (as, for instance, when he had plays to bring out) even after he had permanently fixed his abode elsewhere. The grounds of this retirement have been variously conjectured. One account of it is, that in the *Eumenides*, having introduced a chorus of *fifty* furies on the stage dancing about *στροφάδην*, with wild gestures, haggard features, and serpent-locks, he frightened all the ladies of Athens into fits, and caused several lamentable catastrophes. If this were credible, it would go to decide the question of the presence of women at the performance of *tragedies* at least; and if so, then of *satyric* plays; and, that being granted, there seems little reason, in point of decency, why they should be absent when comedies were acted. But it is in itself absurd; and besides, supposing that this drove him from Athens, it would only account for the poet's expatriation *after* the performance, during the last two years of his life. Aristotle,* again, alludes to his being brought to trial on charge of having revealed something pertaining to the Mysteries in one of his plays, and to his defending himself by pleading ignorance that the point which he had touched upon was among the *ἄρρητα*, the ineffable parts of those solemnities. This story has been mixed up with the last so far as to identify the *Eumenides* with the play in question: but it must doubtless be referred to some earlier one;† and it would therefore explain his withdrawal before B.C. 458. But here we are again in a dilemma. Either the *Areopagus* (who are stated to have assumed cognisance of the matter) acquitted him, as they are related to

* Eth. N. 3.2, 17. That the real plea was what is stated above, not that he was uninitiated, and therefore could have no knowledge of the matter, seems clear. See Wecker, 'Trilogie,' p. 106.

† His *Teſtides*, *ἱεῖς*, *ἑλεῖες*, *ἱερὴν*, and *οὐδῖους* are named by Eustratius in l. c. Aristot. Eth.; and the reference to the *Areopagus* is mentioned in Clem. Alex. Strom. p. 387: both quoted in Æsch. Fragm. 81 Dind.

have done, or they did not. If they did, his retirement was only voluntary,—in disgust, perhaps, but not on compulsion: if they did not, how was he enabled to return at all, or in any way to produce his tragedies under his own name, as we learn from the *Didascalizæ* that he did? Now, in the *Frogs* of Aristophanes, when the mock contest between Æschylus and Euripides begins, our poet is made to 'pray Demeter, the goddess who had nursed his spirit, to keep him ever worthy of her mysteries.' (v. 886 sq.) Probably the verses, which have a fine and solemn flow, are from himself; but, at any rate, they prove an assurance on the part of the comic poet, both that Æschylus was really free from all imputation in such a matter, and, also, that this was the opinion of his audience: else he would not have made him claim as his tutelary goddess her whose curse was supposed to be on him; nor would he, in such a matter, (no high object being in view.) have so incautiously opposed the general feeling. We do not need such stories as this to explain the confession made in the same comedy that Æschylus 'could not agree with the Athenians.' (v. 807.) The matter will explain itself as we proceed with what we called his poetical education.

Perhaps the most poetical era in a nation's history is that in which the old and the new come abruptly into contact, before the scepticism of civilisation and active business-like life has fully done away with superstition. Such was the time of our poet's earlier life, when a belief was still cherished that the gods lingered among men, and interfered sensibly (as we find even in the history of the Persian invasion) for their welfare. In an especial degree, the holy character of his native hamlet Eleusis, the seat of the high mysteries of Demeter and Cora, must have sunk deep into the soul of an enthusiast whose spirit was awed but not quelled by sacred things. It was here that, according to a statement which we see no reason to question, he felt himself early in life set apart for his high calling, as by a voice divine borne in mysteriously on his spirit. And in such a spot we may well conceive the youth to have acquired all that deep tone of religious fervour which characterised the man. There can be little doubt that he was initiated in these mysteries; and the whole tenour of his poetry, and the views of mythology which he adopts, give manifest tokens of something more high, deep, and dread than the joyous, irrepressible Bacchic enthusiasm,—something at once more fiery and more chastised—restrained by depth of principle and character from blazing out, and in virtue of that restraint burning with a flame more pure, more steady, and more intense. The source to which this may be traced was *reverence*—the great ruling principle of the mind of Æschylus, but one

wholly alien to the minds of his countrymen,—one which, perhaps, is to be traced in his writings and those of Plato alone of them all. In the poet it breeds a constant seeking and seeking onward for something to look up to in wonder and worship,—a yearning after the old, the vague, the illimitable—all, in fact, that, *in the absence of revelation*, leads on man's mind towards eternal truth, and connects him with a higher order of being. It is more akin to Gothic than Hellenic feeling—to such a feeling as would not so willingly worship in the garish day as in the religious twilight of long-drawn aisles, with the light of heaven dimly struggling through some storied window, and half illuminating the quaint forms of its fantastic legend. An erring mythology was in the foreground: but

‘As the ample moon,
In the deep stillness of a summer even
Rising behind a thick and leafy grove,
Burns like an unconsuming fire of light
In the green trees; and, kindling on all sides
Their leafy umbrage, turns the dusky veil
Into a substance glorious as her own,
Yea, with her own incorporated, by power
Capacious and serene: like power abides
In man's celestial spirit;’—

and thus to the poet's mind all things were not only pure, but glorified.

For example, let us compare the mythology of Æschylus with that of the *Iliad*,* the origin, as Herodotus himself intimates, of the Greek belief. In the Homeric poem all is clear, definite, tangible, startling. Zeus is an Hellenic king; his capital is the top of a mountain; his attendant gods are an Hellenic court:—the very counterpart of Agamemnon and those who owned him as *ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν* below. They are over men, as the shrewd are over the simple, or as Gyges was raised above his fellows by the possession of his ring: they work as if by spells, not as beings essentially of a higher order. It is everywhere *human nature*, in form and feeling, that we see; and though the heroes of the *Iliad* are religious towards them in outward acts, yet it is difficult to look upon the poet as their worshipper. A form is theirs so definite in outline, that they must veil themselves in clouds to become invisible: a body so material in substance, that a spear

* It must be admitted that there is a great difference in this respect between the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. It is, without doubt, the most striking distinction between them. In the *Odyssey* the gods are *naturally* invisible: they are also, *comparatively speaking*, moral; for instance, *ὁσιε ἀνάν, ὁσιε πάτερ* in the *Iliad* are always used of superhuman *might*; in the *Odyssey* they are applied to *wickedness*. See *G. W. Nitzsch*, in *Erach and Gruber's Encyclopædia*, Art. *Odyssee*.

from a mortal hand can pierce it; and if the wound gives forth ichor and not blood, that is because they eat ambrosia for bread, and quaff nectar instead of wine. They are, in fact, in all respects, *immortal men*, and men not always of the highest order. Not to speak of moral excellence, which of course is out of the question, they are actuated almost invariably by the most petty motives—by spleen, pique, jealousy, and the *spretæ injuria formæ*.

Such were the gods of Greece,—outwardly the creatures of the same spirit which developed itself so wonderfully in her sculptures, and of the bright southern atmosphere which clothed them; inwardly, the realised ideas of a mind which, with great clearness and quickness of comprehension, still grovelled amid material things. The anthropomorphous* tendency which connects the plastic arts with religion, naturally debases this as much as it elevates those. The painter and the statuary soar high above the individual forms of earth, in their attempts to realise the heavenly. This is the poetry of the arts, as portraits comprise their prose; and it is worthy of remark that, until the best days of Grecian art were at an end, there scarcely were such things as portraits at all. And the feeling on which such a distinction rests is singularly illustrated in the descriptions of *beauty* furnished by the tragedians:—the standard of comparison is a *picture* or a *statue*. Thus in a passage of the *Agamemnon*, which we shall not attempt to translate, Iphigenia is described just when

κροκον βαφάς ἐς πεδὸν χέουσα

ἔβαλλ' ἑκαστον θνητῶν ἀπ' ὀμματος βέλει φιλοίκτης,
πρίπουσά θ' ὡς ἐν γραφαῖς, προσεννέπειν θέλουσα.

This is one instance among very many: several may be found in Blomfield's Glossary on the passage (v. 233), though he himself adopts a different explanation. Now, it needs hardly to be pointed out that, unless the Greek *idea* of a painting or a statue was very different from anything *purely imitative*, there would be nothing ennobling, nothing poetical in it. No one would think of comparing an original to a copy. If, however, anthropomorphism conferred this elevation upon art, it was by subtracting just so much from religion:—it could but degrade heavenly forms to the level of earthly conceptions. And as in Aristotle's hackneyed distinction between poetry and history the general truth of the one, though higher, is of the same nature with the particular truth of the other, being deduced from its combinations; so the highest flight of genius could but call into being a *human* form, elevated perhaps far above any individual type, but still in its very perfections deduced from external reality—a con-

* This is a wretched word, but we know of no genuine English equivalent for it.

• deception

ception of the Divine archetype only as derived from nature's attempts to embody it. * Thus the struggle to give form and pressure to their divinities brought them of necessity down to the reach of man's powers. To conceive and express divine nature adequately would of course be a divine attribute; and he who deemed that this had been attained in their wondrous sculptures could not set the god far above the man.

Like considerations will apply to the Greek views of the divine essence of the gods as beings, as contrasted with their outward semblances: here too every notion which went to make up their idea of a divinity was borrowed from this world, too often without being purified in the process. There was nothing of which they could not form a definite conception—nothing that was not *natural*,—that is, according to the views which people have of nature, which do not always exclude contradictions and miracles, provided they get rid of mysteries and reduce everything to the cognisance of the senses.*

And this is rationalism,† which thus entered the Pagan world, as it has entered the Christian; blind to everything which was beyond the scope of its senses, incredulous of all which its reason could not grasp, measuring the hidden realities of things by the fallacious appearances without, and the imaginings of a reprobate mind within. Thus their gods became men, and individual men; nay, out of their own hearts they raised up gods to themselves of their own imaginations, and worshipped, under the name of deities, their own lusts and affections—each his own complex character.

A pantheon of such gods as these could be cheaply honoured, and possessed much that was but too attractive for heathendom. But would a substitute for religion such as this satisfy the void in a soul like our poet's? Would not he feel that no idea which man could realise for himself on such a subject *could* be clear or definite without even thus betraying its poverty and inadequacy? With all the blessings of revelation, and in proportion to our sense of them, we feel that our highest knowledge must of neces-

* The vulgar belief in ghosts, that is, incorporeal beings visible to the bodily sense, will illustrate our meaning, connected as it is with the verity of invisible and spiritual agencies ministering to the heirs of salvation. Moreover, vulgar ghosts are not only visible, but usually *tangible*; they cudgel and horsewhip, which is merely carrying out the same view a little farther.

† In its generic signification that is,—*Rationalismus* as opposed in German theology to *Supranaturalismus*: thus the Romish adoration of images, and the doctrine of transubstantiation, were both the resources of men who recoiled from all that was above sense. And in the latter instance, they repudiated the real mystery, the doctrine that was *above* sense, to accept instead that which was *within* the province of sense, though contradictory to it. This rationalism is not incompatible with superstition, provided it be a gross kind of superstition.

sity be indistinct, because it belongs to the region of faith and not of sight. If mysteries abound where revelation is, what, where she is withdrawn, shall reason do in things divine? In such a case, the train of a serious man's thoughts would be rather—'If there be higher beings in the universe than man, man's only chance of not doing them injustice—of avoiding error and misconception—lies in not venturing beyond what is dim and indefinite.' Such, however, was not the character of the religious system presented to Æschylus; and we speak from his writings in saying that the very depth of his religious feelings made him dissatisfied with deities, whose nature he could fathom,—whose character he could despise. Not that he was truly an unbeliever, The elastic nature of ancient systems saved him from that; and he could acquiesce in the *de facto* dynasty, so to speak, of Olympus, while his heart and his allegiance were elsewhere.* There was an earlier, a more dread and mysterious mythology—*ἡρώων* (Agam. v. 170)—which had passed away and been superseded indeed, but which still lingered in the background of the Hellenic system; and to this he devoted himself with the more energy in proportion to his disquiet—perhaps with the more zeal, for that 'the old faith' seemed neglected. The real gods of his devotion were EARTH with her Titan brood, of whose time-honoured inheritance the Olympic dynasty had possession, but questionably and precariously,—THE FATES,—THE FURIES,—and, above all, the dread power of DESTINY.

There is no time to inquire whether these were the objects of Pelasgian worship before the Hellenic era in Greece: though much might be said in support of the opinion, that this was the true revolution typified in the triumph of the Olympic gods, and that there was a time when their undefined but gigantic shadows hung over the land afterwards peopled by a more cheerful but less impressive mythology. We certainly trace the relics of the Pelasgian worship, not only in Samothrace, but at Eleusis,† the very cradle of Æschylus. But to illustrate the matter itself, we only need to compare the manner in which Destiny (the cardinal point of the Greek drama) is treated by Homer and Sophocles, and by Æschylus. Homer confesses its power, and sometimes in language sufficiently awful, as applying even to the gods. But these passages are balanced by others, which place it in the hand

* It was by no means uncommon for the serious thinkers of Greece and Rome thus to keep terms with the vulgar belief, in a manner very like the political conduct of peaceable Jacobites in the latter half of the eighteenth century.

† This is admitted, rather reluctantly, by Ritter in his *History of Philosophy* (vol. i. p. 138 sq., Engl. transl.). It is a strange confusion which makes him say that 'this, which is seen in the background of Homer and Hesiod, in the tragic writers has wholly disappeared.'—p. 132.

of Zeus; and it usually appears rather as a rule of action, which he has prescribed to himself, and a law which he has given to others, than as anything of higher obligation. Once indeed, to save Sarpedon's life, he has serious thoughts of breaking through it: but is stopped by the hint, *that if he interferes with Destiny in favour of individuals, the other gods will do the same in behalf of their favourites.* (Iliad, xvi. 435 sqq.) This is decisive as to the Homeric conception of Destiny. Sophocles (*ὀυμπικώτατος*, as he is emphatically called) practically adopts Homer's view so far, that he makes Destiny supreme over man; but he avoids the difficult question of its relation to the individual gods. On the other hand, Æschylus boldly asserts its irresistible authority over gods and men. So high is this dread power removed beyond the ruler of Olympus, that the distance from mankind up to him shrinks to nothing in comparison. This is to be sought especially in the Prometheus, a tragedy which wholly depends upon the fatal secret which the Titan hides from Zeus, triumphing, amid all the pangs which divine beings can inflict and suffer, in the prospect of his oppressor's fall, even as Uranus and Cronus had fallen before him. Indications of the same thing may be found in the other plays; and we have often fancied that in the Eumenides an irony, deeper than at first appears, lurked in Apollo's pretended justification of his father for imprisoning Cronus. The Erinyes very naturally criticise his inconsistency in being so severe upon Clytemnestra's crime after his own conduct. Apollo replies,—

‘ Bonds may be loosed again. *That deed admits*
Of easy cure, and many a cheap atonement.
But, blood of man once shed, from dusty death
He rises never. Cure for this is none :
All else Zeus tosses lightly to and fro.’

(Eumen., v. 645 sqq.)

There seems here to be an ironical hint at such a possible revolution as might control the caprice which ‘tosses to and fro’—(*ἀνω τε καὶ κάτω στρέφει*, a scarcely tragic expression)—all things in the world. At any rate, the poet's tone cannot be mistaken, however studiously he may affect to make the justification of Zeus complete.

That a view of the Greek legends, such as we have indicated, was equally available for the purposes of poetry with the vulgar one, it would be rash to say; for it required a giant mind to grapple with its difficulties. But it most undoubtedly contained, in its visionary grandeur, a *higher* poetry than the other; and, in fact, that the gross *humanism* of the usual creed was always unsatisfactory, is proved by the systematic eagerness with which all tried to get rid of it by allegory and such like processes. But the very nature

nature of the earlier one suggested "acquiescence in an imperfect state of knowledge, a willingness to contemplate things unattainable, a sentiment of self-abasement before the Infinite, which was the best preparation for loftier things. Of course it would be lost labour to endeavour after depicting these shadows. Their essence makes it impossible: they are *felt*, not *seen*; and in this consists their power.

Again, it may be affirmed that there was more of TRUTH in the old belief than in that which superseded it. Let us, however, explain ourselves. We are not asserting that any of the fables of either form of paganism actually were in possession of the truth. Both were of the Evil One from the beginning. Nay, the elder were, perhaps, the more monstrous. We are speaking, not of those who perverted the truth and turned it into a lie, but of those who received this, knowing no better, and by instinctive feeling laid hold of those particulars where most trace of the original verity remained. And our meaning is, that there was both more of philosophic truth in the awful feelings which they impressed on their believers—in their association of mystery with things divine,—and more of primitive truth in the notions which these fables enveloped and in a manner overlaid, than in all the opposite characteristics of their successors. Believers in the book of Genesis must hold the tradition of primitive revelation to have been the source of all knowledge of God and divine things, which has existed among the nations. Even from the time when God talked with the patriarchs have the relics of this been preserved; broken, indeed, and scattered, and wrapped up with an infinite deal of error and of falsehood, but still so preserved as to be a principle of life to all that enveloped them. As the nations went farther and farther from the fountain-head, the waters of life became embittered and polluted; but still they were the waters of a heavenly well-spring, until men hewed themselves broken cisterns which would hold *no* water. So long as the principle of faith was suffered to act simply, something still of primeval revelation could be detected by those who knew how to look for it, even among all the gross perversions of a false worship. Their vague notions of the mystery and immensity of the Divine nature,—the dark and gloomy picture of that Destiny which was hanging over all,—the consciousness of man's nothingness, and the nothingness of all around him, as compared with the deep reality of the things which are not seen,—the prominent place which *the war in heaven* held in their belief,—all bear marvellous testimony to the truths which remained—a treasure, though the key was lost—for a fallen world to believe.

DESTINY, as treated by Æschylus, seems to shadow forth
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the influence of man's fall on his inward heart and outward circumstances alike, and finely does the melancholy tone of tragedy harmonise with this, as expressing the feelings created by knowledge of a deep-seated and irremediable disease—a disease that is, of which man could not escape the overwhelming sense, but had lost the knowledge of the cure. The *Destiny* of Sophocles is more irrespective, and as it were mechanical, working by the concurrence of outward circumstances round about and upon his characters, but not within them. Erring and imperfect as his *Œdipus* is represented, the particular actions which cause his misery are done in ignorance and involuntarily: his very deeds are rather sufferings than deeds (*Œd. Col. v. 266 sq.*); and precisely herein, with Sophocles as now-a-days with ourselves, lies the tragic part of his character. But the *Destiny* of Æschylus is no mechanical force, dragging man, whether he will or no, into peculiar positions. It is a power which makes use of his inward impulses to act upon his will, leading him to follow the law of sin which is in his members. Let us look to the story of the Agamemnon, and we shall find startlingly prominent the *μεταρπχος ἀρν*, (v. 1192)—the original guilt of the monarch's ancestor; and this not only works its own vengeance in the sufferings of the race, but *sin begets sin* (v. 758);—the primal taint spreads over the generations of posterity, and each adds to the awful account of crime as well as misery, until the hour comes for Orestes to cope and crown the grisly pile. (v. 1283.) It is an awful confession of the inborn corruption of our nature, and our hereditary sin. Again, let us avail ourselves of the glimpse which the Prometheus affords us of ancient truth refracted and distorted in the dense atmosphere of human imagination. Can we be blind to the strange and awful medley of good and evil, of the Tempter and the Redeemer, which is portrayed in the Titan? On the one hand, here is a godlike Being, but a fallen one, and at enmity with God (v. 119 sq.), who relieves the ignorance of mortals (v. 546),—imparting to them all the wisdom of this world—the arts and accomplishments of life (vv. 109, 254, 506, etc.)—all that the King of Heaven had seen good to withhold from man—all the fruits of the tree of knowledge. (vv. 443 to v. 566.)—But, on the other, it is from pity and love for mortals that this Being acts. (v. 28.) When none else will plead for them he intercedes (v. 231 sq.): when the Supreme resolves to sweep them from the face of creation, he stands forth in their behalf, and saves them from destruction and from hell; and this very love for mortals it is that causes his immortal sufferings: the evil which they escape he must undergo. (vv. 239, 267.) The anger of the God of Heaven rests upon him; and paled—
literally—

literally—to a cross (vv. 19 to 76)—he submits, steadfast in soul and purpose, to agonies that he foreknew and might have shunned (vv. 101, 266), while universal nature sympathises with the sufferer. (vv. 405 to 435.) Surely not without witnesses were left the holiest truths, the most precious promises, even among those who, in abandoning the one, had ceased to look forward to the other!

But it was only in proportion as the old traditions were held fast that even this remained so. The time was come when the world would not acquiesce in the old legends, yet knew of nothing better to set up in their stead. Men tampered with them, without either the knowledge or the feeling of what they were and what they meant. Can we wonder that, in explaining and rationalising and allegorising and philosophising, in the various processes of the alembic to which they were subjected, all that was the life and soul of these legends flew off and was lost? The truths were sedulously cast aside or obliterated; *for they were unmanageable*. The falsehoods were formed into systems, commented upon, and perpetuated. The Gentile sages turned their backs on the east, where the fountain of light was, though hidden behind the mountains; and gave their worship to the reflection of his beams, to the rainbow and the gross western cloud,—clinging to that which was of the earth, earthy—rejecting that which was from heaven. Simple minds, in all their degradation, would still have held somewhat of truth; but ‘the world by wisdom knew not God.’

Was there anything then in Greek *philosophy*, as it existed in the early days of Æschylus, which could influence the formation of a character like his? Surely nothing which his own Ionian race at least had produced. What to him were their speculations on physics, the ‘dynamical’ and ‘mechanical’ theories of Thales or Anaximander? (Ritter, vol. i. p. 190 sqq.) He who, as Cicero says, called Philosophy down from heaven and placed her among men—Socrates—as yet was not. These sages had no notion that there were things in the universe more noble than the material universe itself. They could discourse eloquently on the priority of the elements, the properties of matter, the substance of the sun: they knew something of the theory of comets: they had attained to the prediction of eclipses. Of man alone, placed in the world a little lower than the angels,—of man, whom, nothing as he is, the Deity has vouchsafed to visit and be mindful of,—of his nature, his duties, and the objects of his being, the school of Ionia had nothing to tell!

But there was even then a philosophy of a very different character in Greece. It is of no relevance to our subject to criticise the history of the son of Mnesarchus, to prove his identity,

or to settle his chronology. It skills not to determine here whether there was one Pythagoras, as Bentley and the vulgar deem, or two, as Hesychius says, or sundry, as is the opinion of Niebuhr:—whether his thigh was golden or of flesh and blood:—whether he died at eighty, or at one hundred and seventeen, or at any, or each, of the intermediate years. Personally, Pythagoras is an enigma, and doubtless will remain so; but the Pythagorean philosophy is a FACT, with which we may deal accordingly: and though it may be impossible to satisfy ourselves about particular details, we are enabled, from its extended influence at the time we are treating of, to ascertain enough for our purpose. With this explanation we may be allowed to avoid circumlocution by speaking, as is usual, of the doctrines of *Pythagoras*.

'Science,' in the modern one-sided acceptance in which only physical and mathematical science is meant, was not undervalued by Pythagoras. On the contrary, mathematics were an especially Pythagorean study; *Number*, in all the senses which can be assigned to the term, was his delight; *Music* was one of his most important means of training his disciples; *Order* was the grand perfection of his whole system. His physics indeed were wildly unreal; and seem (if moderns are not wholly in error about them, which is far from improbable) to have been even based upon a confusion between the arithmetical unit and the material atom. But, however strange the speculations, the spirit of the whole was an elevating one: for it was the abstracting of the thoughts from objects of sense, to fix them upon the *forms*, not the *matter* of things. And all this was connected with a truly encyclopedic education in things practical and speculative alike: a real attempt to develop man's whole mind, morally, socially, and religiously. Plato (*De Republ.* p. 600 B.) tells of him that he was deeply beloved by all around him for the system of personal morality which he taught, and which they handed down as the Way of Pythagoras; a *Way* which enforced the most rigid discipline and the most active exertion, combined with a deep and sober spirit of meditation. Politically speaking, his system was aristocratic, in the best and most literal sense of the word;—that those should be placed in the most important situations, whose minds had most profited by his course of training. In religion there was a mystic worship, concerning which, of course, little is known: but it is at least probable that Pelasgian forms, such as were alluded to above—(especially as Pythagoras was said to be of Pelasgian descent)—furnished its substance.

The most remarkable points of the whole, then, are briefly these:—

(1.) The opposition of this system to the materialism of Greece:

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—(2.) the perpetual return of the notion of *Order, Harmony, Subordination*; and (therefrom arising) the special inculcation of deference to authority, and a teachable temper:—(3.) the peculiarly practical character of the whole scheme, and its oneness in all its parts, especially in its plan of education by the culture of the whole man.

Its striking excellence on the whole, notwithstanding all the serious objections to which it is liable, may be inferred from the fact that moderns are at a loss to decide whether the Pythagoreans formed a political union, a religious order, or a philosophical school. In this they seem to forget that man's nature is compound, and his relations various, as a Being moral and intellectual, social and religious. The Pythagorean training was not for philosophers, or citizens, or members of a church. It was for MEN, whose nature fits them for all these characters, and whose duty it is to unite them ALL.

Of course this discipline was liable to impress the scholars with a thorough distrust, not to say contempt for all who did not share the ties and advantages of their society. The majesty of the multitude impressed the mind of a Pythagorean with little awe! The doctrine of rights, as opposed to duties, and unconnected with qualifications, he would hold to be mere madness. His politics, like his music, his personal deportment, and the whole character of the brotherhood to which he belonged, were of that sober and orderly cast, which we would willingly with Mueller * identify as Doric, could we find an authentic specimen of *such* Dorism in history.

Having said so much, it is scarcely necessary for us to say that Æschylus was a Pythagorean. (Cic. Tusc. Quæst. ii. 13.) Indeed, with all the advantages of culture and development which he shared as one of the Ionian blood, he seems to have united much of the sterling depth of character, the sturdy heart of oak, of the ideal Dorian: that character which in the abstract was to the Athenian what Athens in the olden time (see Aristoph. Acharn. v. 179 sqq.) was to the 'young Athens' of Pericles and his successors. But in looking to the actually existing specimens of either tribe, he could have little real sympathy with any: as to his own compatriots, we have already seen that 'he could not away with them' (οὐ συνέβαινεν): and the indignant rejoinder in Aristophanes is, 'No doubt he thought them a nest of thieves.' (Ran. 808.) Yet let us be fair. In the only age when genuine patriotism can be said to have been called forth in Greece,

* However no one ought to study the subject without consulting his 'Dorians,' vol. ii. See also Ritter's History of Philosophy (vol. i.) and Thirlwall's History of Greece (vol. ii. p. 140 sqq.).

Athens was the only state where its light burned steady and pure. (Herodotus, vii. 139, ix. 8 sqq.) Herein were they and he mutually worthy of each other; and well has he sung the glories that he shared. But when this excitement was at an end, and parties were no longer kept together by the pressure of external danger, his *somnia Pythagorea*—dreams of private and public virtue—were rudely dispelled. There were in Athens, as there are under one name or other everywhere, a conservative and a levelling party,—their leaders Aristides and Themistocles,—their engines the Areopagus and the Ostracism: but Conservatism and Aristides were powerless against the ready craft and worldly wisdom of a popular leader like Themistocles. The influence of Aristides sank, one may say, as his character rose.* The attachment of *Æschylus* to this great man (who really does seem to have fully deserved all the honour which attaches to his name) is shown in ‘the drama big with war,’ the *Seven against Thebes*, in the character of *Amphiaraus*, the good, the mild, the wise, who chose to be just, and cared not for the seeming: a perfect character, who is hurried to destruction only because he is by circumstances bound up with a reckless and faithless crew. (vv. 592, 605 to 614.) The whole audience, we are told (Plut. ap. Mueller, *Eumen.* § 38), at once applied the character as, no doubt, the poet meant it. The same thing is also shown in the stress laid, in his ‘*Persians*,’ on the part which Aristides took in the battle of *Salamis*, though a very subordinate one. (Compare *Æsch.* *Pers.* v. 447 sqq. with Herod. viii. 95.)

One effort was now made after another to upset what remained of *Solon’s* constitution; and the point of attack chosen was the *Areopagus*. For the poet’s view of these attempts, which was undoubtedly the true one, we must refer to his noble vindication of the court, and of the principles of order which it represented, in the *Eumenides*.† But before this the corruption had been at work on both sides: the principles of Aristides ceased to influence the party of Aristides: they lost their vantage-ground by adopting the atrocious policy of their Roman contemporaries: *Ephialtes*, like *Genucius*, fell by the treachery of his opponents.

Massacres by the populace would have caused less horror; for men’s feelings are more excited by a single *inconsistent* crime, than by an uniform course of evil. It is the white robe that shows the stain of blood; and when the friends of order used the

* The anecdote of the citizen who asked him to write his own name on the shield wishing to ostracise him, because he was sick of hearing any one called *The Just*, may perhaps not be literally true; but it embodies a great truth: *urit enim fulgore suo*, etc.: the only consolation is, *extinctus amabitur idem*,—Athens buried Aristides.

† Mueller’s historical elucidations of the subject are excellent.

weapons of assassination, their strength might well turn to weakness. Æschylus himself, after Aristides died, stood in the place of Amphiaraus.—Why then betake ourselves to gossip about his causing miscarriages by his machinery? Why lend an ear to worse calumnies, and impute a betrayal of the mysteries, or a connivance at, if not a share in the death of Ephialtes—that is, in plain terms, *murder* or *sacrilege*—to the purest, the most devout soul of ancient Greece? Surely we need nothing more than the sketch of his character which we have drawn from his life and writings, to account for his having retired in disappointment and despondency, long before discord reached its highest pitch.

More we know not with certainty,—save that he died and was buried with great pomp at Gela in the year 456 B.C.

This sketch has detained us much longer than we expected; and there yet remains for us the consideration of the master-work, the *Oresteia* itself. To this, and some of the questions connected with it, we may return hereafter, when Klausen, whose '*Chœphori*' has appeared, publishes the '*Eumenides*' also. In treating, meanwhile, of Æschylus himself, and endeavouring to draw a slight outline (in the absence of materials for anything more) of his real character, we trust that we may have been neither uninterestingly nor uselessly employed. If, indeed, we could adequately express even our own imperfect conceptions of him, it would be felt that there is no heathen writer—no, not Plato himself—from whom lessons of deeper and more practical truth can be drawn:—none more likely to kindle in others a holy devotion to the high ends of man's being.

In conclusion, we would express our thanks to the conductors of the *Bibliotheca Græca* for giving us such useful and valuable works as (to say nothing of others) Dissen's Pindar, Stallbaum's Plato, and Klausen's Æschylus. To Mr. Peile too our thanks are due for the labour and learning displayed in his '*Agamemnon*'. He promises to continue the series; and he can, if he will, make it a valuable accession to our libraries. But to this end he must eschew tediousness, and cease to think that the poetry of Æschylus (εὔτε πόντος ἐν μεσημβρινᾷ | κοίταις ἀνύμων νηέμοις εὖδοι πειῶν, v. 565) may with impunity be translated in language like '*When the sea, in British seamen's phrase (!), had turned in for his meridian nap*' (p. 176). If he persists in playing such antics as this and others that we could mention, we have only to take our leave of him in the words of the good old Archbishop of Granada:—'*Adieu, monsieur: je vous souhaite toutes sortes de prospérités, avec un peu plus de goût.*'

ART. VI.—1. *The Pentameron and Pentalogia*. London. Post 8vo. 1837.

2. *Poems, Original and Translated*. By John Herman Merivale. Now first collected. 2 vols. 12mo. London, 1839.

WHEN we read the *Pentameron* on its first appearance, now two years ago, it hardly seemed to require notice at our hands, as we had shortly before devoted a considerable space in this journal to Mr. Landor's writings generally, and in particular to the long series of his *Imaginary Conversations*. Taking up the volume, however, for the purpose of comparing some of its criticisms on Dante with Mr. Merivale's, we found that we could not lay it down until we had read it all over again, and by that time we had marked so many passages, that though we have no intention of going into another formal criticism, we consider it as due to Mr. Landor that we should thank him for the pleasure his new dialogues have afforded us, and to our readers that we should invite their attention to some of the striking thoughts, images, and expressions scattered profusely over a little work which has as yet attained only a very small circulation—nay which, we apprehend, might almost be said to have fallen still-born from the press.

Boccaccio is supposed to be visited, during his recovery from an illness towards the close of his life, by Petrarch; and they converse together during *five days*, on such subjects as Mr. Landor might justly imagine to have occupied, under such circumstances, these gentle and generous friends: for friends they were in weal and in woe, living and dying—and, indeed, the vindication of their memories, from the vulgar charge of envy and mutual disparagement, fills one of the most pleasing of their skilful admirer's pages. He says:—

'When an ill-natured story is once launched upon the world, there are many who are careful that it shall not soon founder. Thus the idle and inconsiderate rumour, which has floated through ages, about the mutual jealousy of Boccaccio and Petrarca, finds at this day a mooring in all quarters. Never were two men so perfectly formed for friendship; never were two who fulfilled so completely that happy destination. True it is, the studious and exact Petrarca had not elaborated so entirely to his own satisfaction his poem of *Africa*, as to submit it yet to the inspection of Boccaccio, to whom unquestionably he would have been delighted to show it the moment he had finished it. He died, and left it incomplete. We have, it must be acknowledged, the authority of Petrarca himself, that he never had read the *Decameron* through, even to the last year of his life, when he had been intimate with Boccaccio four-and-twenty. How easy would it have been for him to dissemble this fact! How certainly would any man have dissembled it who doubted of his own heart or of his friend's!

Mr.

Mr. Landor quotes the last letter of Petrarch to Boccaccio:—

“ I have only run over your *Decameron*, and therefore I am not capable of forming a true judgment of its merit: but upon the whole it has given me a great deal of pleasure. *The freedoms in it are excusable; from having been written in youth, from the subjects it treats of, and from the persons for whom it was designed.* Among a great number of gay and witty jokes, there are however many grave and serious sentiments. I did as most people do: I paid most attention to the beginning and the end. Your description of the people in the Plague is very true and pathetic; and the touching story of Griseldis has been ever since laid up in my memory, that I may relate it in my conversations with my friends. A friend of mine at Padua, a man of wit and knowledge, undertook to read it aloud; but he had scarcely got through half of it, when his tears prevented him going on. He attempted it a second time; but his sobs and sighs obliged him to desist. Another of my friends determined on the same venture; and, having read it from beginning to end, without the least alteration of voice or gesture, he said, on returning the book, ‘ It must be owned this is an affecting history, and I should have wept, could I have believed it true; but there never was, and never will be, a woman like Griseldis.’ ”

‘ Here (says Mr. Landor) was the termination of Petrarca’s literary life: he closed it with the last words of this letter; which are, “ *Adieu, my friends! adieu, my correspondence!* ” Soon afterward he was found dead in his library, with his arm leaning on a book. In the whole of this composition, what a carefulness and solicitude to say every thing that could gratify his friend; with what ingenuity are those faults not palliated but *excused* (his own expression) which must nevertheless have appeared very grievous ones to the purity of Petrarca!

‘ But why did not Boccaccio send him his *Decameron* long before? Because there never was a more perfect gentleman, a man more fearful of giving offence, a man more sensitive to the delicacy of friendship, or more deferential to sanctity of character. He knew that the lover of Laura could not amuse his hours with mischievous or idle passions: he knew that he rose at midnight to repeat his matins, and never intermitted them. On what succeeding hour could he venture to seize? with what countenance could he charge it with the levities of the world? Perhaps the Recluse of Arqua read at last the *Decameron*, only that he might be able the better to defend it. And how admirably has the last stroke of his indefatigable pen effected the purpose! Is this the jealous rival? Boccaccio received the final testimony of unaltered friendship in the month of October, 1373, a few days after the writer’s death. December was not over when they met in heaven—and never were two gentler spirits united there.

‘ The character of Petrarca shows itself in almost every one of his various works. Unsuspicious, generous, ardent in study, in liberty, in love, with a self-complacency, which in less men would be vanity, but arising in him from the general admiration of a noble presence, from his place in the interior of a heart which no other could approach or merit, and from the homage of all who held the principalities of learning in

every part of Europe. Boccaccio is only reflected in, full from a larger mass of compositions: yet one letter is quite sufficient to display the beauty and purity of his mind. It was written from Venice, when finding there, not Petrarca, whom he expected to find; but Petrarca's daughter, he describes to the father her modesty, grace, and cordiality in his reception. The imagination can form to itself nothing more lovely than his picture of the gentle Ermessinda; and Boccaccio's delicacy and gratitude are equally affecting. No wonder that Petrarca, in his will, bequeathed to his friend a sum, the quintuple in amount of that which he bequeathed to his only brother, whom, however, he loved tenderly.

Such had been, long before their acquaintance, the celebrity of Petrarca, such the honours conferred on him wherever he resided or appeared, that he never thought of equality or rivalry. And such was Boccaccio's reverential modesty, that, to the very close of his life, he called Petrarca his master. Immeasurable as was his own superiority, he no more thought himself the equal of Petrarca, than Dante (in whom the superiority was almost as great) thought himself Virgil's. These, I believe, are the only instances on record where poets have been very tenaciously erroneous in the estimate of their own inferiority. The same observation cannot be made so confidently on the decisions of contemporary critics. Indeed the balance in which works of the highest merit are weighed, vibrates long before it is finally adjusted. Even the most judicious men have formed injudicious opinions on the living and the recently deceased. Bacon and Hooker could not estimate Shakspeare, nor could Taylor and Barrow give Milton his just award. Cowley and Dryden were preferred to both, by a great majority of the learned. Many, although they believe they discover in a contemporary the qualities which elevate him above the rest, yet hesitate to acknowledge it; part, because they are fearful of censure for singularity, part, because they differ from him in politics or religion, and part, because they delight in hiding, like dogs and foxes, what they can at any time surreptitiously draw out for their sullen solitary repast. Such persons have little delight in the glory of our country, and would hear with disapprobation and moroseness it has produced four men so pre-eminently great, that no name, modern or ancient, can stand very near the lowest: these are, Shakspeare, Bacon, Milton, and Newton. Beneath the least of these (if any one can tell which is least) are Homer and Aristoteles; who are unquestionably the next. Out of Greece and England, Dante is the only man of the first order; such he is, with all his imperfections. Less ardent and energetic, but having no less at command the depths of thought and treasures of fancy, beyond him in variety, animation, and interest, beyond him in touches of nature and truth of character, is Boccaccio. Yet he believed his genius was immeasurably inferior to Alighieri's; and it would have surprised and pained him to find himself preferred to his friend Petrarca; which indeed did not happen in his lifetime. . . . Two contemporaries so powerful in interesting our best affections, as Giovanni and Francesco, never existed before or since. Petrarca was honoured and beloved by all conditions. He collated with the student and investigator, he planted with the husbandman, he was the counsellor of kings,

kings, the reprover of pontiffs, and the pacificator of nations. Boccaccio, who never had occasion to sigh for solitude, never sighed in it: there was his station, there his studies, there his happiness. In the vivacity and versatility of imagination, in the narrative, in the descriptive, in the playful, in the pathetic, the world never saw his equal, until the sunrise of our Shakspeare. Ariosto and Spenser may stand at no great distance from him in the shadowy and unsubstantial; but multiform Man was utterly unknown to them. The human heart, through all its foldings, vibrates to Boccaccio.'

We have seen in what words Petrarch *actually* wrote to his friend about the Decameron. Mr. Landor supposes Boccaccio, during his visit at Certaldo, to have spoken with great regret of certain features in the great work, and even signified an intention of destroying the MS.; and Petrarch is made to answer thus:—

'Your production is somewhat too licentious; and young men, in whose nature, or rather in whose education and habits, there is usually this failing, will read you with more pleasure than is commendable or innocent. Yet the very time they occupy with you would, perhaps, be spent in the midst of those excesses or irregularities to which the moralist, in his uttermost severity, will argue that your pen directs them. Now there are many who are fond of standing on the brink of precipices, and who, nevertheless, are as cautious as any of falling in. And there are minds desirous of being warmed by description, which, without this warmth, might seek excitement among the things described. I would not tell you in health what I tell you in convalescence, nor urge you to compose what I dissuade you from cancelling. After this avowal, I do declare to you, Giovanni, that in my opinion the very idlest of your tales will do the world as much good as evil; not reckoning the pleasure of reading, nor the exercise and recreation of the mind, which in themselves are good. What I reprove you for is the indecorous and uncleanly; and these, I trust, you will abolish. Even these, however, may repel from vice the ingenuous and graceful spirit, and can never lead any such toward them. *Never have you taken an inhuman pleasure in blunting and fusing the affections at the furnace of the passions; never, in hardening by sour sagacity and ungenial strictures, that delicacy which is more productive of innocence and happiness, more estranged from every track and tendency of their opposites, than what in cold crude systems hath holden the place and dignity of the highest virtue.* May you live, O my friend, in the enjoyment of health, to substitute the facetious for the licentious, the simple for the extravagant, the true and characteristic for the indefinite and diffuse.

'Enter into the mind and heart of your own creatures: think of them long, entirely, solely; never of style, never of self, never of critics, cracked or sound. *Like the miles of an open country, and of an ignorant population, when they are correctly measured they become smaller. In the loftiest rooms and richest entablatures are suspended the most spider-webs; and the quarry out of which palaces are erected is the nursery of nettle and bramble.*

'Admirable as you are in the jocose, you descend from your natural position when you come to the convivial and the festive. You were placed among the affections, to move and master them, and gifted with the rod that sweetens the fount of tears. My nature leads me also to the pathetic, in which, however, an imbecile writer may obtain celebrity. Even the hard-hearted are fond of such reading, when they are fond of any; and nothing is easier in the world than to find and accumulate its sufferings. Yet this very profusion and luxuriance of misery is the reason why few have excelled in describing it. The eye wanders over the mass without noticing the peculiarities. To mark them distinctly is the work of genius; a work so rarely performed, that, if time and space may be compared, specimens of it stand at wider distances than the trophies of Sesostris.'

In a later dialogue, Boccaccio's design of writing a commentary on the '*Divina Commedia*' being under discussion, Petrarch says,

'Your main difficulty lies not in making explanations but in avoiding them. Some scholars will assert that everything I have written in my sonnets is allegory or allusion—others will deny that anything is; and similarly of Dante. It was known throughout Italy that he was the lover of *Beatrice* Porticari. He has celebrated her in many compositions; in prose and poetry, in Latin and Italian. Hence it became the safer for him afterward to introduce her as an allegorical personage, in opposition to the *Meretrice*, under which appellation he (and I subsequently) signified the papacy. If Laura and Fiametta were allegorical, they could inspire no tenderness in our readers, and little interest. But, alas! these are no longer the days to dwell on them.

'*Boccaccio*.—Ah Francesco! Francesco! well may you sigh, and I too, seeing that we can do little now but make verses and doze, and want little but medicine and masses. Do not look so grave upon me, for remembering so well another state of existence. He who forgets his love may still more easily forget his friendships. I am weak, I confess it, in yielding my thoughts to what returns no more; but you alone know my weakness.

'*Petrarca*.—We have loved; and so fondly as we believe none other ever did; and yet, although it was in youth, Giovanni, it was not in the earliest white dawn, when we almost shrink at his freshness, when everything is pure and quiet, when little of earth is seen, and much of heaven. It was not so with us: it was with Dante. The little virgin, *Beatrice* Porticari, breathed all her purity into his boyish heart, and inhaled it back again; and if war and disaster, anger and disdain, seized upon it in her absence, they never could divert its course nor impede its destination. Happy the man who carries love with him in his opening day! He never loses its freshness in the meridian of life, nor its happier influence in the later hour. If Dante enthroned his *Beatrice* in the highest heaven, it was *Beatrice* who conducted him thither. Love, preceding passion, ensures, sanctifies, and I would say, survives it, were it not rather an absorption and transfiguration into its own most perfect purity and holiness.

'*Boccaccio*.—Up! up! look into that chest of letters, out of which I took

took several of yours, to run over, yester-morning. All those of a friend whom we have lost, to say nothing of a tenderer affection, touch us sensibly, be the subject what it may. When, in taking them out to read again, we happen to come upon him in some pleasant mood, it is then the dead man's hand is at the heart. Opening the same paper long afterward, can we wonder if a tear has raised its little island in it? Leave me the memory of all my friends, even of the ungrateful! They must remind me of some kind feeling; and perhaps of theirs; and for that very reason they deserve another. It was not my fault if they turned out less worthy than I hoped and fancied them. Yet half the world complains of ingratitude, and the remaining half of envy.'

We may take with these beautiful passages the following from another colloquy:—

'Petrarch.—O Giovanni! the heart that has once been bathed in love's pure fountain retains the pulse of youth for ever. Death can only take away the sorrowful from our affections: the flower expands; the colourless film that enveloped it falls off and perishes.

'Boccaccio.—We may well believe it; and, believing it, let us cease to be disquieted for their absence who have but retired into another chamber. We are like those who have overslept the hour: when we rejoin our friends, there is only the more joyaunce and congratulation. Would we break a precious vase, because it is as capable of containing the bitter as the sweet? No: the very things which touch us the most sensibly are those which we should be the most reluctant to forget. The noble mansion is most distinguished by the beautiful images it retains of beings past away; and so is the noble mind.

'The damps of autumn sink into the leaves and prepare them for the necessity of their fall; and thus insensibly are we, as years close round us, detached from our tenacity of life by the gentle pressure of recorded sorrows.'

Mr. Landor makes Petrarch pronounce thirty lines of the episode of Ugolino (*'Ed io senti,'* &c.) to be 'unequalled by any other continuous thirty in the whole dominions of poetry:' but from this judgment the author of the Decameron dissents; and we consider the analysis thus introduced exquisitely just and delicate.

'Boccaccio.—Give me rather the six on Francesca; for if in the former I find the simple, vigorous, clear narration, I find also what I would not wish, the features of Ugolino reflected full in Dante. The two characters are similar in themselves; hard, cruel, inflexible, malignant, but, whenever moved, moved powerfully. In Francesca, with the faculty of divine spirits, he leaves his own nature (not, indeed, the exact representative of theirs), and converts all his strength into tenderness. The great poet, like the original man of the Platonists, is double, possessing the further advantage of being able to drop one-half at his option, and to resume it. Some of the tenderest on paper have no sympathies beyond; and some of the austere in their intercourse with their fellow-creatures have deluged the world with tears. It is not from the

rose that the bee gathers her honey, but often from the most acrid and the most bitter leaves and petals.

“Quando legemmo il disiato riso
 Esser baciato di cotanto amante,
 Questi, che mai da me non sia diviso!
 La bocca mi baciò tutto tremante...
Galeotto fù il libro, e chi lo scrisse...
 Quel giorno più non vi legemmo avante.”*

In the midst of her punishment, Francesca, when she comes to the tenderest part of her story, tells it with complacency and delight; and, instead of naming Paolo, which indeed she never has done from the beginning, she now designates him as

“Questi che mai da me non sia diviso!”

Are we not impelled to join in her prayer, wishing them happier in their union?

* *Petrarca*.—If there be no sin in it.

* *Boccaccio*.—Ay, and even if there be... God help us! What a sweet aspiration in each cesura of the verse! three love-sighs fixt and incorporate! Then, when she hath said

“La bocca mi baciò, tutto tremante,”

she stops: she would avert the eyes of Dante from her: he looks for the sequel: she thinks he looks severely: she says,

“*Galeotto* is the name of the book,”

fancying by this timorous little flight she has drawn him far enough from the nest of her young loves. No, the eagle beak of Dante and his piercing eyes are yet over her.

* “*Galeotto* is the name of the book.”

* “What matters that?”

* “And of the writer.”

* “Or that either?”

* At last she disarms him; but how?—“*That* day we read no more.”

* Such a depth of intuitive judgment, such a delicacy of perception, exists not in any other work of human genius; and from an author who, on almost all occasions, in this part of the work, betrays a deplorable want of it.

* *Petrarca*.—Perfection of poetry! The greater is my wonder at discovering nothing else of the same order or cast in this whole section of the poem. He who fainted at the recital of Francesca,

“And he who fell as a dead body falls,”

would exterminate all the inhabitants of every town in Italy! What execrations against Florence, Pistoia, Siena, Pisa, Genoa! what hatred against the whole human race! what exultation and merriment at eternal and immitigable sufferings! Seeing this, I cannot but consider the “*Inferno*” as the most immoral and impious book that ever was written. Yet, hopeless that our country shall ever see again such poetry, and certain that without it our future poets would be more feebly urged forward to excellence, I would have dissuaded Dante from cancelling it, if this had been his intention. Much, however, as I admire his vigour and severity

severity of style in the description of Ugolino, I acknowledge with you that I do not discover so much imagination, so much creative power, as in the "Francesca." I find, indeed, a minute detail of probable events: but this is not all I want in a poet; it is not even all I want most in a scene of horror. Tribunals of justice, dens of murderers, wards of hospitals, schools of anatomy, will afford us nearly the same sensations, if we hear them from an accurate observer, a clear reporter, a skilful surgeon, or an attentive nurse. There is nothing of sublimity in the horrific of Dante, which there always is in Æschylus and Homer.'

This last paragraph, too, is a masterly one; yet our readers will probably pause, like ourselves, before they adopt all its conclusions. As to the Ugolino, for example, Mr. Hallam indicates, with his usual terse brevity, one very important consideration to which our imaginary interlocutors have not adverted. Speaking of Cervantes' great tragedy, he says, 'Few, probably, would desire to read the Numancia a second time. But it ought to be remembered that the historical truth of this tragedy, though, as in the Ugolino of Dante, it augments the painfulness of the impression, is the legitimate apology of the poet. Scenes of agony and images of unspeakable sorrow, when idly accumulated by an inventor at his ease, as in many of our own older tragedies, and in much of modern fiction, give offence to a reader of just taste, from their needlessly trespassing upon his sensibility. But in that which excites unto abhorrence of cruelty and oppression, or which, as the Numancia, commemorates ancestral fortitude, there is a moral power, for the sake of which the sufferings of sympathy must not be flinched from.'—*Hist. of Literature*, vol. iv. p. 362.

It appears to us that Mr. Landor compares Homer and Dante, here and there, as if he were not fully aware of the immeasurable distance between them. or, indeed, between the former and any other poet that ever breathed, except Shakspeare. Yet there is felicity in one of his illustrations:—'I do not think Dante is any more the equal of Homer than Hercules is the equal of Apollo: though Hercules may display more muscles, yet Apollo is the powerfuller, without any display of them at all.' And we admire what we are about to quote:—

'The *Inferno*, the *Purgatorio*, the *Paradiso*, are pictures from the walls of our churches and chapels and monasteries, some painted by Giotto and Cimabue, some earlier. In several of these we detect not only the cruelty, but likewise the satire and indecency of Dante. Sometimes there is also his vigour and simplicity, but oftener his harshness and meagreness and disproportion. I am afraid the good Alighieri, like his friends the painters, was inclined to think the angels were created only to flagellate and burn us; and Paradise only for us to be driven out of it.

'In the *Odyssey* the mind is perpetually relieved by variety of scene and character. There are vices enough in it, but rising from lofty or
from

from powerful passions, and under the veil of mystery and poetry: there are virtues too, enough, and human and definite and practicable. We have man, although a shade, in his own features, in his own dimensions: he appears before us neither cramped by systems nor jaundiced by schools; no savage, no cit, no cannibal, no doctor. Vigorous and elastic, he is such as poetry saw him first; he is such as poetry would ever see him. In Dante, the greater part of those who are not degraded are debilitated and distorted. No heart swells here, either for overpowered valour or for unrequited love. In the shades alone, but in the shades of Homer, does Ajax rise to his full loftiness: in the shades alone, but in the shades of Virgil, is Dido the arbitress of our tears.'

We shall now select for our readers' benefit a few miscellaneous specimens of the imaginary table-talk of Certaldo, giving ourselves no concern about the order in which they are presented. Not one fragment but may at least stimulate thought and reflection.

'Middling men, favoured in their lifetime by circumstances, often appear of higher stature than belongs to them; great men always of lower. Time, the sovereign, invests with befitting raiment and distinguishes with proper ensigns the familiar; he has received into his eternal habitations: in these alone are they deposited!'

'A wrong step in politics sprains a foot in poetry; eloquence is never so unwelcome as when it issues from a familiar voice; and praise hath no echo but from a certain distance.'

'All correct perceptions are the effect of careful practice. We little doubt that a mirror would direct us in the most familiar of our features, and that our hand would follow its guidance, until we try to cut a lock of our hair. We have no such criterion to demonstrate our liability to error in judging of poetry; a quality so rare, that perhaps no five contemporaries ever were masters of it.'

'Cicero changed his style according to his matter and his hearers. His speeches to the people vary from his speeches to the senate. Toward the one he was impetuous and exacting; toward the other he was usually but earnest and anxious, and sometimes but submissive and imploring, yet equally unwilling, on both occasions, to conceal the labour he had taken to captivate their attention and obtain success. At the tribunal of Cæsar the dictator he laid aside his costly armour, contracted the folds of his capacious robe, and became calm, insinuating, and adulative, showing his spirit not utterly extinguished, his dignity not utterly fallen, his consular year not utterly abolished from his memory, but Rome, and even himself, lowered in the presence of his judge.'

'The sunshine of poetry makes the colour of blood less horrible, and draws up a shadowy and a softening haziness where the scene would otherwise be too distinct. Poems, like rivers, convey to their destination what must without their appliances be left unhandled: these to ports and arsenals, this to the human heart.'

'A poet

‘A poet often does more and better than he is aware at the time, and seems at last to know as little about it as a silkworm knows about the fineness of her thread.’

‘I do not think Ovid the best poet that ever lived, but I think he wrote the most of good poetry, and, in proportion to its quantity, the least of bad or indifferent. He wants on many occasions the gravity of Virgil; he wants on all the variety of cadence; but it is a very mistaken notion that he either has heavier faults or more numerous. His natural air of levity, his unequalled and unfailing ease, have always made the contrary opinion prevalent. Errors and faults are readily supposed, in literature as in life, where there is much gaiety; and the appearance of ease, among those who never could acquire or understand it, excites a suspicion of negligence and faultiness. Of all the ancient Romans, Ovid had the finest imagination: he likewise had the truest tact in judging the poetry of his contemporaries and predecessors. Compare his estimate with Quintilian’s of the same writers, and this will strike you forcibly. He was the only one of his countrymen who could justly appreciate the labours of Lucretius.

“Carmina sublimis tunc sunt peritura Lucreti,
Exitio terras quum dabit una dies.”

And the kindness with which he rests on all the others shows a benignity of disposition which is often lamentably deficient in authors who write tenderly upon imaginary occasions.’

‘Have you never observed that persons of high rank universally treat their equals with deference; and that ill-bred ones are often smart and captious? Even their words are uttered with a brisk and rapid air, a tone higher than the natural, to sustain the factitious consequence and vapouring independence they assume. Small critics and small poets take all this courage when they licentiously shut out the master.’

‘Envy would conceal herself under the shadow and shelter of contemptuousness, but she swells too huge for the den she creeps into.’

‘There are poets among us who mistake in themselves the freckles of the hay-fever for beauty-spots.’

‘We may write little things well, and accumulate one upon another; but never will any be justly called a great poet unless he has treated a great subject worthily. He may be the poet of the lover and of the idler, he may be the poet of green fields or gay society; but whoever is this can be no more. A throne is not built of birds’-nests, nor do a thousand reeds make a trumpet.’

‘Vengeance has nothing to do with comedy, nor properly with satire. The satirist who told us that Indignation made his verses* for him,

* *Facit indignatio versum.—Juv.*

might have been told in return that she excluded him thereby from the first classes, and thrust him among the rhetoricians and declaimers.'

'Frequently, where there is great power in poetry, the imagination makes encroachments on the heart, and uses it as her own. I have shed tears on writings which never cost the writer a sigh, but which occasioned him to rub the palms of his hands together, until they were ready to strike fire, with satisfaction at having overcome the difficulty of being tender.'

'Crooked and cramp are truths written with chalkstones.'

'Be assured, our heavenly Father is as well pleased to see his children in the playground as in the schoolroom.'

The author, from whom such things as these drop every now and then, on whatever subject he is employed, stands at a wide distance from the fashionable purveyors of what is called light reading, to ourselves the most wearisome of all. Our readers will of course enjoy the fragments we have been detailing still more than they now do, when they come on them again in their rightful place and connexion; and, indeed, though there is hardly any story in the book, the characters of Petrarch and Boccaccio are developed, through the introduction of some humble persons and small incidents, with a skill and effect which nobody (undisturbed by chalkstones) can fail to appreciate and admire. The book has its bitternesses, its insolences, and its bad jokes;—if it wanted these, many will reply, it could be none of Mr. Landor's—but the good and gentle elements in this case very largely predominate; and we would gladly believe that a man of such masculine abilities, who has in him such wisdom and such humanity—such a fund of genuine tenderness of heart—will, as he advances in the vale of years, dismiss altogether the unhappy turbulences of temper that have hitherto, far more than any other circumstance whatever, interfered with the popular acceptance of his writings.

We said that we had recurred to the *Pentameron*, in consequence of something that struck us in the other book named at the head of this paper. This is a collection of numerous pieces, larger and smaller, original and translated, which have amused the leisure hours of an eminent lawyer, and most of which had been published previously, some a great many years ago. They are such as might be expected from an elegant scholar, condemned to pass most of his life in the practice of a laborious profession, but nevertheless clinging fondly to the classical tastes of his youth, and enjoying the literary productions of his eminent contemporaries with the keen and generous zeal of an essentially kindred spirit. Where opportunity for severe strenuous literary
exertion

exertion is denied, a gracefully-cultivated taste is likely to satisfy itself with attempts obviously imitative; and Mr. Merivale not only confesses that such is the character of most of his own untranslated verses, but is wise enough to be thankful for the evidence of unflagging sympathies which the various steps of his progress afford to himself in the retrospect.

There is one portion of this gentleman's poetical writings with which most of our readers must be sufficiently familiar—we mean his charming versions of the Greek Anthology, originally put forth in conjunction with those of his early friend, Mr. Bland, and already more than once so reprinted. The edition of 1833 was treated of at considerable length in our 98th Number (see p. 349, &c.). He has now for the first time given a series of specimens after the Latin and Italian poets, which appear to us quite as excellent as any of our old acquaintances: the version of the Descent into Hell in the *Æneid*—several canzonets and sonnets from Petrarch, Boccaccio, &c., and various episodes of Dante, in particular.

Mr. Merivale modestly protests against any invidious comparison of these last with the corresponding pages in complete versions of the *Divina Commedia*; and it is true that there would be some unfairness in subjecting the authors of those laborious performances to such a scrutiny. We have here, no doubt, what of many experiments seemed to Mr. Merivale himself, after the lapse of years, most successful. He intimates, too, that he had never designed a complete translation, but only handled parts of surpassing excellence, with the view of introducing them into a projected Life of Dante. The truth is, however, that, having very lately compared the versions of Cary and Wright pretty minutely, and quoted largely from both (see *Quarterly Review*, vol. lxix.), we should not on this occasion have thought it necessary to recur to Mr. Merivale's predecessors; nor shall we now say more than that in our opinion he has, as to the ground he does traverse, excelled them both. He, like Mr. Wright, adopts the *terza rima* of the original, but he does not follow the example of avoiding its chief difficulty, and consequently, as we think, its chief beauty. In short, his tercets have, like Dante's, the interlinking rhyme.

We must give one of these exquisite episodes, and we take that of Paolo and Francesca, partly because the reader has Mr. Lander's criticism on the most touching part of it fresh in memory, and partly because the subject has lately been rendered into the language of another art, in one of the most graceful and, we are scarcely afraid to add, *the most pathetic* of relieves:*

* We believe Mr. Westmacott's marble is now in the collection of Lord Lansdowne.

' And now the accents of despair resound.
 Already have I journey'd on my way
 To where loud wailings rend the welkin round—
 A place unhallow'd by the voice of day.
 Bellowing as ocean's waves, by tempest curl'd,
 When warring winds dispute his tyrant sway,
 The infernal snow-drift, ever onward hurl'd,
 Hurries the miserable crowd along,
 With restless violence, through that nether world ;
 And, when they to the brink of ruin throng,
 Then are the shrieks, the groaning and lament,
 And blasphemies, that do heaven's justice wrong.
 Such, I was told, the destined punishment
 Of sinners, who, by fleshly lusts subdued,
 Have reason's law to lawless passion bent.
 And as, in winter time, the starling brood
 Wing their swift flight in many a thickening row,
 So drove that blast the imprison'd multitude
 Hither and thither urged—above, below ;
 While to their 'wilder'd spirits no solace bring
 Hopes of repose, or e'en of lessen'd woe.
 And, like as cranes their plaintive descant sing,
 While marshalling in air their long array,
 E'en so those hapless ghosts went murmuring
 Their soft complaints along the stormy way ;
 Whereat I ask, " Those crowds, so torn and tost
 By the dense air—tell, master, what are they ?"
 Then answer'd he—" Of all that numerous host,
 Whose fate thou dost inquire, the First in rule
 Of many-languaged nations made her boast ;
 An adept such in luxury's shameless school,
 '*Quod libet, licet*,' was the legend old
 Wherewith she sought her burning brows to cool.
 Her name Semiramis—of whom 'tis told
 She after him who was her consort reign'd.
 Those realms she held the soldan now doth hold.
 Next, She who, for love's sake, to live disdain'd,
 And broke her promise to Sichæus' shade.
 Then Egypt's lustful queen." With her entrain'd,
 I Helen mark'd, for whose fair form was paid
 A price so high. Achilles too I spied,
 Who, to the last, with love fierce warfare made.
 Paris I saw, and Tristan ;—these beside,
 Thousands he show'd, and singled out by name,
 Whom love from worldly life did erst divide.
 When all these dames and knights of ancient fame
 My teacher, one by one, I heard rehearse,
 Compassion all my senses quite o'ercame ;
 And thus I cried—" O man of deathless verse
 Yon pair of spirits, that seem before the blast
 So lightly driven,—with them I'd fain converse." Then

Then he to me—"Watch till they shall be pass'd
 More nearly towards us ; then, advancing, pray
 Even by the love that guides them—and, as fast
 As the wind drives, they will thy call obey."
 Therewith my voice I raised ; "O souls distress'd !
 Come, speak with us, unless denied to stay."
 They then, as doves, that to their tender nest
 On firm expanded pinions through the sky
 Are driven, by force of will-born passion press'd,
 So, from the band where Dido haunts, they fly,
 Towards us repairing through that fog malign—
 Of such enforcement was my earnest cry.
 "O living man ! Thou gracious and benign,
 To visit Us, through this dun region sent,
 Who, dying, stain'd the earth with crimson sign—
 If that the Almighty ruler's ear were bent
 To our petitions, we would pray for thee,
 Since thou hast pity on our strange chastisement.
 Whether to speak or list thy pleasure be,
 To speak and listen we alike are fain,
 Now, while the silent air is tempest-free.—
 My place of birth is seated by the main,
 On that sea-shore to which descendeth Po,
 In quest of peace, with all his vassal train.
 Love, whom the gentle heart soon learns to know,
 Him bound a slave to that fair form, which I
 Was doom'd—(ah how reluctant !)—to forego.
 Love, that no loved one suffers to deny
 Return, entwined us both with cords so strong,
 That, as thou seest, he still is ever nigh.
 Love to one fate conducted us along,
 While Caina 'waits him who our lives did spill."—
 Such was the burthen of that mournful song,
 Which, with their tale, did so my bosom thrill,
 As made me droop my head, and bend full low ;
 When thus the bard : "Thy mind what evils fill ?"
 Thereon I recommenced, "Alas for wo !
 How many sweet thoughts, what intense desire,
 Has brought them to this dolorous pass below ?"
 I then turn'd back to them, and thus to inquire
 Began—"Francesca ! thy sad destinies
 With grief and pity at once my breast inspire.
 But tell me—in the season of sweet sighs—
 How, and by what degrees thy passion rose,
 So as to read his love's dim phantasies ?"
 Then she to me, "Among severest woes
 Is to remember days of dear delight
 In misery—and this thy teacher knows.

But

But if thou hast so fond an appetite
 From its first source our love's sad maze to thread,
 Though tears may flow, I will the tale recite.
 One day, for pastime, we together read
 Of Lancelot—how love his heart enchain'd.
 We were alone, and knew no cause for dread.
 But, oft as met our eyes, our cheeks were stain'd
 With blushes by the glowing tale inspired;
 Till one smile point the fatal victory gain'd.
 For when we read the smile, so long desired,
 Which to the lover's kiss her answer bore,
 He who shall ne'er from me be parted—fired
 With passion—kiss'd my lips, all trembling o'er
 Like his. The book was pandar to our thought,
 And he that wrote. That day we read no more.”
 Thus, while one spake, that other spirit was wrought
 To such a flood of tears, that with the swell
 Of pity all my sense was quite o'erfraught;
 And, as a lifeless body falls, I fell.”

Merivale, vol. ii. pp. 212-216.

We are sorry to say that we consider Mr. Merivale's version of the six inimitable lines ('Quando leggemmo,' &c.) as less fortunate than the rest. He has omitted one great beauty—the prayer 'Questi che mai da me non sia diviso;' and he has weakened Dante by the interpolations 'fired with passion' and 'trembling o'er like his.' Nevertheless, the episode has never before had so good an English dress.

We conclude with Mr. Merivale's still better version of the famous Canzonet which Boccaccio wrote at the prayer of poor Lisa Puccini, when, wasting for love of the King of Sicily, she could no longer suppress her passion, yet could not, or durst not, express it for herself. This lady, despatching the messenger with the immortal *billet-doux*—(*Galeotto fu chi lo scrisse*).—was also the subject of one of the best performances in the Royal Academy's Exhibition for 1838 :*—

'Go, herald Love, and hie thee to my lord,
 And tell him all the woes I'm doom'd to taste.
 Tell him, to death I haste,
 Hiding for shame the thoughts my mind hath stor'd
 For mercy's sake, O Love! I thee implore,
 Go seek my master where he holds his dwelling.
 Say how I long, and languish, and adore,
 And with what fervid hopes my bosom's swelling—
 That by the fire that riots in my veins
 I think to die, but know not yet the hour
 When death will free me from these scorching pains,

* We do not know the fate of this fine picture by Mr. Hurlstone.

Which I sustain for him—him still desiring,
 Yet still, through shame retiring.
 Oh let him know what griefs this frame devour—
 That, ever since for his dear sake I languish,
 I have not dared, through fear my will constraining,
 So much as once make him to know my anguish,
 Or let him hear the voice of my complaining.
 'Tis worse than death, unheeded thus to perish.
 Then let me fondly cherish
 The thought he yet may hear, without disdain,
 My love's sad tale, no longer shame restraining!
 But since, O Love! it was not thy high pleasure
 That I should so my maiden pride abase
 As to my Lord reveal my thought's dear treasure,
 Yet grant me, sovereign Love! this little grace—
 Thou to him hie, and to his memory bring
 The day I saw him, arm'd with lance and shield,
 Victorious in the field,
 The best and bravest of the knightly ring.
 That hour, alas! reveal'd
 To my own thought my thought's most hidden spring.

Vol. ii. pp. 192, 193.

In a noticeable passage of her late novel, *Deerbrook*—(being the account of the loves of two Birmingham spinsters, sisters, for the same gentleman, the apothecary of a neighbouring village)—we find Miss Martineau expressing her belief that young ladies often take the initiative, and her surprise that the practice is not still more common. The tender missive of Lisa Puccini may therefore be of use to some fair damsel heart-pierced at the tiltings of Eglintoun.

ART. VII.—*Etudes sur les Orateurs Parlementaires*. Par Timon. Huitième édition. 2 tomes, 12mo. Paris, 1839.

TIMON is the well-known *nom de guerre* of M. le Vicomte de Cormenin, a remarkable man in many ways—of whose career and character it is absolutely necessary to say something, if only to enable our readers to judge how far his estimates of individuals may be warped by his own personal predilections and antipathies.

M. de Cormenin is old enough to have played a part, more or less prominent, under each of the three last grand systems or *régimes*,—the Empire, the Restoration, and the Revolution of July. Under the Empire he filled the post of auditor to the council of state, and was made a baron by Napoleon, whose victories he had celebrated

celebrated in early youth by odes. During the *hundred days* he left Paris for the purpose of forming part of that garrison of a frontier town lying directly in the line of march by which the allied armies were expected to advance; but, finding valour unavailing, and this somewhat superfluous show of it having fortunately escaped the notice of his contemporaries, he made up his mind to drop politics awhile, and fall back upon the study of administrative law (*droit administratif*), which he has cultivated with eminent success. His acquirements in this branch of knowledge were not withheld from the service of the public in consequence of the want of concord between the government and himself: on more than one occasion he appeared before the chambers as an advocate of the crown, and, in pleading for a grant of a milliard of livres, by way of indemnity to the emigrants, he went so far as to term the measure 'un acte populaire.' Neither did he disdain to accept a favour from a source tainted with legitimacy; for under the Villele ministry he solicited and obtained, through the keeper of the seals (Peyronnet) letters-patent for the erection of a *majorat*, with the title of Vicomte. When, therefore, on the morrow of the Revolution of July, he was heard demanding a constituent assembly and universal suffrage, many plain-speaking persons did not hesitate to denounce him as a Carlist in disguise. Very probably he was not at that time in the best possible humour with the movement-party; and, after being at the pains to procure a new title and a majorat, he might reasonably have preferred a state of things in which he could make the most of such advantages; but at all events his supposed *penchant* for royalty has not prevented him from exerting himself to the utmost to annoy and disappoint its present and (perhaps) last representative in France. Louis Philippe loves money: so does M. de Cormenin. Of all his majesty's projects, perhaps that touching the establishment of an appanage for the heir-apparent, at the expense of the nation, was the one which he had most thoroughly at heart; and the discussion regarding it was the precise description of controversy in which our 'Timon' was peculiarly qualified to shine. His Letters on the Civil List proved the death-blow of the scheme. His arguments, indeed, were answered and his figures of arithmetic upset by M. Linguay, in a pamphlet entitled 'La Liste Civile Dévoilée,' distributed at five sous a copy by the court; but his figures of speech told better, and he might fairly be said to have gained the victory by style.

M. de Cormenin has been many years a member of the Chamber of Deputies, but he hardly ever addresses it—a circumstance to be kept steadily in mind when we come to examine his

sketches of more venturesome cotemporaries. Once, however, when challenged by M. Montalivet on a question regarding the civil list, and all but dragged to the tribune by his friends, he extricated himself by a juxtaposition of figures expressed in a sentence, which effectually checked the laughter of the ministerialists. But he generally replies to the attacks made in the chamber through the press; and it is said that under Carrel's editorship he contributed an immense number of articles, of unequal merit, to 'The National.' He may be what Johnson called Bathurst, 'a good hater;' but physiognomy is all a lie, if, with his low brow and sharp nose, he can hate with magnanimity. On one occasion M. de Montalivet formally retracted the title of *Honourable*, which, he said, he had only given M. Cormenin by mistake in the hurry of debate. A parallel instance has occurred in our House of Lords, where Lord Brougham once drew an invidious distinction between *illustrious* by deeds and *illustrious* by courtesy. So much for the author: now turn we to the book.

The first section or Study (the preliminary matter being somewhat affectedly divided into *études*), is entitled 'Of the Causes which constitute the peculiar Kind of Deliberative Eloquence in each Country.' A few sentences will show that none but a Frenchman could have written it:—

'There are four things to be considered in parliamentary eloquence: the character of the nation, the genius of the language, the political and social wants of the epoch, and the physiognomy of the auditory.

'If the character of the nation is cold and taciturn, like that of the English and Americans, they will be excited with difficulty. Gifted with patience, they will be as little wearied with speaking as with listening. *They will set themselves at table to hear an orator during whole hours, as they would to drink or smoke.*

'If, on the contrary, the national character be irritable and mobile, like that of the French, it wants but a touch to make them believe themselves wounded, or a tap on the shoulder to make them turn round. Long speeches tire us, and when a Frenchman is tired, he goes away. If he cannot go away, he stays and talks: if he cannot talk, he yawns and goes to sleep.'—vol. i. p. 8.

When M. Lermnier was in England—we mean the French professor, who nearly caused a revolution a few months ago by his perseverance in lecturing his class after forfeiting their favour by accepting one from the ministry—he spent almost all his evenings in the strangers' gallery of the House of Commons, and avowed an intention of repairing to America for the express purpose of studying the proceedings of Congress, so soon as he had thoroughly familiarized himself with the proceedings of the British parliament; but whenever, emboldened by this avowal, an interlocutor ventured to speak English, it was found that the learned professor

was incapable of following a single sentence of the language in which the proceedings in question were carried on. M. Cormenin has evidently undertaken to draw parallels between three great deliberative assemblies with qualifications even inferior to M. Lermnier's: for an hour's study of the bare pantomime of debate would have induced him to doubt the justice of his remarks. Whatever may be the case with the American Congress, the English House of Commons is still one of the most critical and important audiences in the world, and the slightest recurrence to its recent history would have shown, that its increased and increasing capacity for endurance has no connexion whatever with *national character*—in the sense in which it is understood by M. Cormenin. In the days of Pitt, Fox, Sheridan, Tierney, Grey, Plunkett, Canning, Copley and Brougham, every man who, from character or position, was entitled to address the house or had any useful information to communicate, was sure of a fair hearing; but no bores or prozers of any sort were tolerated. The reason was, that the members, besides being as a body of a more cultivated and fastidious cast, were comparatively unfettered by any direct pressing apprehension of responsibility, and free to pursue the real objects of debate. It was then reckoned rather discreditable to be eternally thinking about what your constituents might think; and we well remember the ironical cheers and laughter called forth by Lord Melbourne (then Mr. Lamb), in the parliamentary reform debate of 1826, when, in the course of a bitter and personal reply to Sir John (then Mr.) Hobhouse, he twitted his (now) right honourable colleague with speaking more for the hustings than the house. But since the measure to which Lord Melbourne during the first half-century of his existence was so vehemently and (he then said) unalterably opposed was carried by a cabinet of which he formed a part, the practice has been introduced, and bids fair to become inveterate, of speaking almost exclusively for constituents through the press. *Veniam petimusque damusque vicissim*—‘Let me prose away long enough to occupy a column or two in the newspapers, and I will let you;’ and, so long as his drafts on the patience of the house do not exceed in amount or frequency what is strictly necessary for this recognised object, almost any member may command an occasional hearing, though we should hardly venture to pledge ourselves, with M. Timon, that his fellow-members will set themselves *at table* to listen to him as complacently as they would to ‘drink or smoke.’ This senatorial virtue is only to be expected of representatives in the strict-literal acceptation of the term; i. e., delegates bound hand and foot, by pledges or instructions, to be as regular as schoolboys

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at a call, and liable to be taken to account at a moment's warning for saying anything that they ought not to say, or leaving unsaid anything that they ought. Accordingly we find it in the highest degree of perfection in the Congress of the United States, where (as may be read in Captain Hall) each member has a little table to himself, on which he leans his elbows, or writes his letters, and where (as a recent traveller remarks) one-half of a speech is addressed to electors a thousand miles off; another half to the ladies in the galleries, and the remainder to the Congress itself. With regard to the French Chambers, we can well believe the difficulty of getting them to listen to anything but what tickles their vanity or excites their passions: yet, so long as written orations continue to be read from the tribune, surely the praise or dispraise of superior restlessness must be withheld. In a word, M. Cormenin's distinctions are altogether fanciful, and he might have spared us his philosophy until he had verified his facts: for to account for the assumed patience of the English by the coldness of the national character, is much the same as accounting for our assumed tendency to suicide by the same causes;—statistical writers having clearly established that three or four nations beat us hollow in this propensity, and that the Prussians undoubtedly stand first.

His next distinction is no better founded:—

‘In the second place we must pay attention to the genius of the language. If the language be hissing, hard, and *un peu dédaigneuse*, like the English, more importance will be attached to things than style. We shall not be offended by inversions or juxtapositions of words. *If the particular genius of the language permits the sense to be suspended, and the governing verb to be placed at the end of the phrase, it will be easier to keep up the attention of the audience.* Common figures, proverbial maxims, low and vulgar expressions, may be allowed, provided they be expressive. That which the discourse will lose in sobriety and conventional taste, it will gain in energy and truth. If the language be pompous and soft, like the Spanish or Italian, the speaker will aim at sonorousness of expression and the harmony of periods. Amongst the nations whose organization is musical, the ear requires to be flattered as much as the soul to be filled. *But if the language be noble, elegant, polished, correct, philosophical, like the French,* great preparation and long practice will be needed for public speaking. If the diction were too lagging, the speaker would sink into monotony; if too rapid, into hesitation. He will avoid redundant words and heavy epithets, which check the effusion of thought and embarrass the march of the discourse. He will bear in mind that the spirit of French assembly is so prompt that it seizes the sense of a phrase before it is finished, and divines the intention before it is well conceived,—so delicate that it revolts against repetitions, be the address of the *synonymies* what it may,—and so pure that it is wounded by the slightest neologism,

unless it be brilliantly set, or springs, by an irresistible compulsion, from the force of the situation itself.'—*Ibid.*, p. 9.

When some one was expatiating on the merits of French to Mr. Canning, he exclaimed—'Why, what on earth, Sir, can be expected of a language which has but one word for *liking* and *loving*, and puts a fine woman and a leg of mutton on a par—*J'aime Julie—J'aime un gigot?*' This was hardly fair, since no language is happier in expressing the various shades of social sentiment, or affords an apter medium of communication between people of the world; but of all the languages, ancient or modern, in which the productions of human genius have been embodied, it is certainly the least fitted for any of the highest purposes of poetry and eloquence; nor are we aware, at the present moment, of a single imaginative poet or first-rate orator, who does not in his own person form a striking illustration of the difficulty of rising unimpeded, or keeping long upon the wing, in such an atmosphere.

As to the test proposed in the above paragraph—if a language were favourable or unfavourable to rhetoric in proportion as it permitted the sense to be suspended by throwing the verb to the end of the phrase, the Germans ought to excel all modern nations; and we must do them the justice to say that wherever (as in the Baden Chamber of Representatives) a fair opportunity has been afforded them, they have shown no lack of proficiency in the art: but we doubt the alleged advantage, and whoever has been at the pains of examining the construction of Lord Brougham's periods, will agree with us, that, even in English, the sense may be suspended too long. We may instance a well-known occasion when he contrived to interpose so much matter between the nominative and the verb, that all perceptible connexion was at an end; and (the verb being unluckily *idem sonans* with another word) the sense probably remains suspended to the majority of the audience to this hour: 'My honourable friends—who did so and so—who saw so and so—who heard so and so—who said so and so, &c. &c. (each successive parenthesis forming a long sentence) know.' Whether the concluding word was *know* or *no*, was the doubt.

The *epoch* is the third topic of consideration, and the student is particularly recommended to keep flights of imagination and bold apostrophes for situations which justify them and moments when the audience is warmed for their reception. (*Ibid.*, p. 10.) Plain and obvious as this precept may be thought, it is frequently neglected by first-rate orators. Mr. Grattan's *burst* of invocation: 'Spirit of Swift! spirit of Molyneux! your genius has prevailed! Ireland is now a nation!'—forms the fourth sentence of the speech,

speech, and must have been uttered before the members were well settled in their seats.

The fourth topic, the necessity of considering before whom you speak, gives occasion to M. Cormenin to declare that the first-class orators are mob-orators, and that amongst these Mr. Daniel O'Connell is *facile princeps*:—

'Eloquence has not all its influence, its strong, sympathetic, stirring influence, except on the people. Look at O'Connell, the greatest, perhaps the only orator of modern times! What a colossus! How he draws himself up to his full height! How his thundering voice sways and governs the waves of the multitude! *I am not an Irishman*—I have never seen O'Connell—I do not know his language, I should not understand were I to listen to him. Why, then, am I more moved by his discourses, badly translated, discoloured, maimed, stripped of the allurements of style, gesture, and voice, than by all those heard in my own country? It is because they bear no resemblance to our rhetoric, tormented by paraphrase; because passion, true passion, inspires him—the passion which can and does say all. It is because he tears me from the ground, rolls with me and drags me into his torrent—that he trembles and I tremble—that he kindles, and I feel myself burning—that he weeps, and tears fill my eyes—that his soul utters cries which ravish mine—that he carries me off upon his wings, and sustains me in the hallowed transports of liberty. Under the impression of his mighty eloquence, I abhor and detest with a furious hatred the tyrants of that unfortunate country, as if I were the countryman of O'Connell, and I take to loving *la verte Islande* almost as much as my own country.—*Ibid.*, p. 15.

It was by no means superfluous in the writer of this paragraph to assure us he is not an Irishman; and it will be necessary for him to assure us that he is not, and has never been, a great many other things, before we give him full credit for his enthusiasm. Yet let us be just to the member for all Ireland, the master-spirit of the Melbourne ministry, the influence behind the cabinet, greater (which is not saying much for it) than the cabinet itself. When Mr. O'Connell first appeared upon the stage, it was as the representative of a cause which, just or unjust, was well fitted to enlist the sympathies of the warm-hearted and unreflecting of all countries on his side, and there was then an earnestness, an emphasis, an energy, in his effusions, which looked and felt like truth. At that period he was sometimes compared to Mirabeau, with whom, in fact, he had little or nothing in common beyond a reckless abandonment of principle. But since he became a member of the British Parliament, he has done little more than repeat the old worn-out cuckoo song of 'justice;' and on all great occasions he is uniformly outshone, in point of elocution, by a rival. (Mr. Shiel) who had no chance at all with him on their original field of action, the Corn Exchange of Dublin. Yet Mr. O'Connell had never
a larger

a larger following, though he might have had a more respectable one, than now; and may still be seen distributing the patronage of the Viceregal government with one hand, whilst with the other he retains a tottering ministry in place. How comes this? We fear the true solution of the problem is to be found in the demoralisation of Ireland, and that he is more indebted to the brutalised character of his ordinary audiences than to his eloquence. What, for example, have been his pet topics, his most effective appeals to the reason and imagination of his admiring, confiding countrymen within the year? Insinuations, preposterously unfounded, that an amiable and excellent nobleman, whose death was really owing to the prevalence of *Precursor* principles, had been murdered by his own son!—and assertions that Sir Robert Peel and the Duke of Wellington were anxious to place their own friends about the Queen for the purpose of compassing her death! In each instance the orator was vehemently applauded; and so well adapted, it seems, to popular feeling was the last topic, that it was forthwith plagiarised and worked up anew by a gentleman laudably desirous of keeping up the notoriety, if he cannot keep up the distinction, of his name. Now, is there an out-of-the-way village in England where a speaker could hazard such topics, without being denounced as a villain or laughed at as a fool? Then let us hear no more of equality in institutions till we discover some slight approximation to equality in morals, feelings, information and intellect; nor let foreigners blame us for refusing the first place amongst orators and patriots to an individual, whose best argument is a calumny, and his most effective figure of rhetoric an untruth.

‘Study the Second,’ entitled ‘Comparison of Orators and Writers,’ we reserve until we come to discuss the claims of those members of the Chambers in whom the two characters are combined.

The Third, ‘That there are many Modes of Debating,’ describes three classes of orators, or, more correctly speaking, persons anxious to be considered in that light; namely, those who improvise, those who recite what they have learned by heart, and those who read what they have written.

Rousseau’s grand maxim for the composition of a love-letter is, to begin without knowing what you are going to say, and end without knowing what you have said. According to M. Cormenin, extempore speakers are pretty generally agreed to regard this maxim as equally applicable to the composition of a speech:—‘they suffer themselves to be borne along by the current, visiting meadows, woods, cities, and mountains on their way, but they know not where to cast anchor or to land’—

‘And

And where the subject-theme may gang
 Let time and chance determine;
 Perhaps it may turn out a sang,
 Perhaps turn out a sermon.'

Your reciter, on the other hand, is apt to produce an oration quite out of keeping with the time, and resorts to all sorts of tricks to make you believe he is extemporising. 'He is never in harmony with his audience; he feels not the god within, the god of the Pythoness, who agitates and overwhelms; he has the eloquence which recalls and not the eloquence which invents; he is the man of yesterday, whilst the orator should be the man of the moment; he is the man of art, not the man of nature—a comedian, who does not wish to appear one, and who is his own prompter.' (p. 28) The moral (though M. Timon does not draw it) from all this is, that the most effective speaker will be he who, thoroughly meditating his matter and arranging his arguments beforehand, trusts to the excitement of the moment for the language and the tone. The precise expressions, the *ipsissima verba*, of a striking passage, indeed, may sometimes be written down and learnt by heart with advantage: for example, Lord Brougham has acknowledged that the peroration of his principal speech on the Queen's trial was penned seven times over before he could satisfy himself; and no one who heard Mr. Canning's opening speech on Portuguese affairs in 1826, or his defence of Mr. Huskisson's commercial policy in the Silk Trade debate, could doubt that he was occasionally indebted to his memory. But, far from regarding this as a reflection on these two great masters, we cite it as a proof of their proficiency: the effective introduction of a got-up passage is amongst the highest triumphs of the art. For this reason we have always doubted the accuracy of Horace Walpole's account of Single-speech Hamilton's single speech: 'Young Mr. Hamilton opened for the first time in behalf of the treaties, and was at once perfection. His speech was set and full of antitheses, but these antitheses were full of argument, and he broke through the regularity of his own composition, answered other people, and fell into his own track again with the greatest ease.' Our conviction is that Hamilton had anticipated the leading objections, and that the replying parts of his speech were as much studied as the rest. We happen to know that a modern single-speech hero, who came out during the Reform Bill debates, and deceived many good judges in the same manner, gave a fair copy of his speech to the reporters,—a fact which the initiated might have inferred from the identity of the reports in the principal newspapers.

A third class, the readers (*lisseurs*), are described as 'the gentlemen who take their time, cough, spit, sneeze, lay their spectacles

cles on the marble of the tribune, and rub the glasses with the corner of their handkerchief. They also have certain tricks of trade. They write close to make you believe from the look of the paper that they will be short. The deceivers! You will find that they will not turn over the leaf for some time to come. Their copy is like the index-hand of a dial which never moves.' The obvious objection to this style of debating is well illustrated by M. Timon. 'When I see the leaders of the opposition and the ministry crossing the steps of the tribune to the right and left, with their volumes of eloquence in their hands, I seem to see two armies dragging their artillery in parallel lines along the two banks of a river, without ever being able to reach each other.'

Reading a speech is contrary to the regulations of our House of Commons: but the practice, though diminishing, still continues in the French Chambers; and for some years after the meeting of the States General (from which French popular eloquence bears date) hardly any other mode of regular discussion was understood. Even Mirabeau possessed little power as a *debater*—in the English meaning of the word: almost all the bursts with which he occasionally electrified the assembly were prepared; and whenever he had a formal statement or argument to deliver, he read from a paper like the rest. M. Dumont relates an amusing instance of the embarrassment into which he was frequently betrayed by his indolence and undue confidence in his *faiseurs*. The scene is the debate on the *veto* :—

'There had been such a number of detestable speeches, that the presence of Mirabeau rejoiced everybody; but no sooner had he commenced than I recognised phrase by phrase the doctrine and the style of *Casseaux*. The clumsiness of the construction, the singularity of the expressions, the obscurity of the reasoning, soon damped the attention of the assembly. It was soon found that he was supporting the absolute *veto*, an additional ground for murmuring. Mirabeau, who had scarcely read over this hodge-podge to himself, becoming aware of its defects, soon threw himself into all the digressions, the commonplaces against despotism, and by some brilliant sallies obtained the ordinary tribute of applause from the galleries; but, when he returned to his fatal copy, the tumult soon recommenced, and he had great difficulty in finishing, notwithstanding his courage, which never abandoned him in a critical moment. I never saw him disconcerted but this once. He confessed to us that, as he proceeded in the reading, he was covered with a cold sweat, and that he skipped a full half without being able to substitute anything for it, because, in his over-confidence, he had neglected to study the subject.'—*Souvenirs, &c.*, p. 106.

All Chateaubriand's discourses were read, not spoken; which, we presume, is the reason why he has no place assigned him amongst M. Cormenin's portraits of orators.

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The section on 'The Professions which predispose to Parliamentary Eloquence' affords a curious illustration of the varying and contrasted elements of which the French and English legislative assemblies are composed. M. Timon says that the deputies whose tongues 'vibrate with most fluidity and continuity' are the advocates, the professors, and the military. The advocates meet with no mercy at his hands. Forgetting Mauguin, Odilon-Barrot, Dupin, Berryer, &c., he can allow them no merit of any kind—'Rich in words and poor in argument, they are ever ready to talk for whom you wish, on what you wish, and as long as you wish: warm in language and cold at heart, they may be seen prostrating, beating, trampling upon a minister, and an hour after—(to the scandal of the country strangers perched on the back benches of the gallery)—they are discovered shaking hands with the individual whom they had just denounced as the greatest unhanged scoundrel upon earth.'

The professors, he complains, rule the Chamber like a class. They begin, he ironically says, by depositing *their square cap* on the tribune, and the secretaries have sometimes surprised some of them (amongst others, M. Guizot) in the act of *drawing the ferule* from under the magisterial gown. 'They are vain, subtle, dry, imperious, dogmatic. They wish not to convince but to constrain. They have the stiffness of methods, the despotism of axioms.'—(p. 33.)

The military, he proceeds, approach the tribune with boldness, impatience and fire, as if they were storming a battery; they carry their heads high; they have the gesture of command, and they look people in the face; they have full licence given them as regards both action and speech. Thus General Foy was wont to use both fist and feet, to thump the tribune, grapple with it, and demean himself like one possessed. He foamed, and his passion found vent at each corner of his mouth. But they let him go on: the wearer of a square cap would have been put down at once. 'For myself,' adds our author, 'let who will blame my taste, I prefer these rude soldiers, who unsheath their sabres and march right upon you, to your soft rhetoricians who assassinate you with pins.'—(p. 35.)

M. Timon is quite welcome to his taste, though we cannot say we agree with him; but it is unnecessary to form any opinion upon the point, as our military leave their sabres at home, and roar, when they do roar, as gently as sucking-doves. Of professors, again (unless such people as Pryme, Wakley, &c., are to be called *professors*), we have none whatever; and, considering the number of lawyers in parliament, the legal profession (with the solitary exception of Lord Brougham, who is an exception to everything)

everything) cannot fairly be accused at present of taking the lion's share in our debates.

The more immediate object of these preliminary extracts and remarks being the illustration of national differences, we refrain from dwelling on various other important considerations suggested by them, and pass on to M. Timon's 'Classification of Orators according to their Disposition and Peculiarities.' He first enumerates the imaginative, the logical, the pathetic, and the malicious, which, we presume, is the classification by disposition: then the economists, the jurists, the specialists (or practical men), the theorists, the formalists, the generalisers, the phraseologists, and the interrupters, which must be the classification by peculiarities. Corresponding, or nearly corresponding, classes might probably be discovered in all numerous assemblies;—but we have no space at present for a prolonged analysis or comparison, and will merely extract the description of the interrupters:—

'The interrupters are of two sorts: there are interrupters who speak, and others who do not. The interrupters who do not speak make much more noise than those who do, for they imitate with a felicity of resemblance and a truth of execution which leaves nothing to desire, the cries of all the tame and wild animals that the Creator has scattered over the globe. They bray, bark, mew, crow, bleat, neigh, growl exactly like them. The interrupters who speak are very effective in the use of monosyllables and the interjections *ch! oh! hi! ouf! what? how? heavens! ah!* They term this—not being able to restrain the expression of their feelings. They pretend that eloquence does not require such long speeches; that they need but a word, a single word, to convince or move. They desire the reporter to send them the proofs of the sitting to correct, and no sooner has the official journal registered their *oh!* or their *ah!* in its columns, than they write to their constituents, "You will see in the *Moniteur* of to-day that I have worthily discharged my legislative trust, and that I have not suffered the session to pass without saying something."—vol. i., p. 48.

Our own reformed House of Commons, we need not say, can boast as many and as accomplished orators of this class as any chamber in the world. Our *crowers* and *mewers* are at least as pestilent now-a-days as the French.

To speak, however, of better days. The manner in which Mr. Pitt disconcerted Erskine belongs also to the category of what may be termed the pantomime of debate. It was well known that Erskine's vanity or sensitiveness was so morbidly acute, that the least mark of indifference put him out; and there is a traditional anecdote in Westminster Hall, that a decided advantage was obtained by an antagonist who caused an attorney, famous for yawning, to be placed between the advocate and the jury-box. On Erskine's rising to address the House, Pitt placed

placed himself in a listening attitude, and took up a pen as if with the intention of taking notes, but as the speech proceeded, he gradually assumed a look of the most complete indifference, and at length—at the very moment when Erskine was personally appealing to him, and their eyes met—he leant forward with a marked gesture of impatience and flung the pen contemptuously aside. Erskine was seen to falter, and huddled up the conclusion of his speech. Pitt followed, and completed his discomfiture by disposing of the entire oration in a parenthesis: ‘I rise to reply to the Right Honourable member (Mr. Fox) who opened this discussion. As to the gentleman who spoke last, he really has done no more than regularly repeat what fell from the gentleman who preceded him, and as regularly weakened what he repeated.’ Erskine was regarded as a parliamentary failure from that hour, though we quite agree with an excellent judge, Lord Brougham, that it was from no deficiency in the required talents that he failed; witness, amongst others, his famous speech on the Jesuits’ Bark Bill. *

Let it here be observed, however, that interruption is a *ruse* not unattended with risk, and may chance to make the success of a speech and the reputation of an adversary. We may instance the case of Mr. Grote, who, according to his friend Mr. Sydney Smith, would be an important politician if the world were a chess-board. He was reciting a diatribe against sundry persons unknown, alleged to be guilty of corruption, when a cry arose of name—‘Name?’ was the retort; ‘their name is *legion*.’ Mr. Grote has ever since been regarded as a miracle of wit and readiness, though we are credibly informed that it takes him an hour to understand one of his friend’s jokes, and a month to compose one of his own speeches. Lord North, again, had little reason to congratulate himself when he ventured on an interruption with Burke. In a debate on some economical question Burke was guilty of a false quantity—‘*Magnum vectigal est parsimonia*.’ ‘*Vectigal*,’ said the minister in an audible undertone. ‘I thank the noble lord for his correction,’ resumed the orator, ‘since it gives me an opportunity of repeating the inestimable adage—*Magnum vectigal est parsimonia*.’

Many of Lord Chatham’s most characteristic effusions were elicited in this manner. ‘On one occasion’ (the reporter is no less a person than Grattan) he had said, “I hope some dreadful calamity will befall the country that will open the eyes of the King,” and then he introduced the allusion to the figure drawing the curtains of Priam, and gave the quotation. He was called to order: he stopped, and said, “What I have spoken I have spoken conditionally, *but I now retract the condition*. I speak it absolutely,

lutely, and, I hope that some signal calamity will befall the country;" and he repeated what he had said. He then fired and oratorised, and grew extremely eloquent. Ministers, seeing what a difficult character they had to deal with, thought it best to let him proceed.* Everybody must remember Lord Brougham's exquisite adaptation of a passage from Milton, (applied with little inferior felicity by Burke)—

'What seemed its head,

The likeness of a kingly crown had on.'

He caught it up whilst speaking, from a bystander, who chanced to whisper it to a friend.

The general tactics of ministries and oppositions, majorities and minorities, are next dwelt upon at length, with the time and manner in which the various sorts of arms (to borrow a military expression) are to be employed, from the heavy artillery of the set-speechmakers, to the sharp, rattling, irregular fire of the questioners. But as no recipe is given for converting a majority of two into twenty, or inspiring the Duke and Sir Robert with an abstract desire of place, we fear that neither the Whig-Radical nor the Conservative leaders would be much edified by the sagacious precepts of M. Timon; with perhaps the exception of the following:—

'What is called ministerial eloquence is almost always nothing but false eloquence, commonplaces on morality and public order, phraseology, declamation, worn-out topics vamped up anew.

'It is the vehemence of passion, inspiration, uncontrolled emotion, the spur of the occasion, that give birth to eloquence. Now what is more dangerous for the statesman than these bursts? For he ought to possess the prescience of what he is going to do; busy himself about what he ought to keep back even more than about what he ought to put forth; preserve an entire command over others' passions and his own; be on his guard against enthusiasm; stop short, if necessary, in the very middle of his victory to make it surer, and never let fall any of those illuminated expressions that are picked up and played with by the press.'—*ib.* p. 58.

Command of temper is recommended on other grounds:—

'Angry ministers excite the passions of the opposition as violent winds excite storms. Good-humoured ministers appease the passions, as a gentle breeze appeases the waves.'—p. 57.

Lord North acted on this maxim; and perhaps the secret of the famous coalition is to be found in the conciliating demeanour which he uniformly opposed to the intemperance of Fox. Thus when contemptuously alluded to as 'that thing termed a minister,' he replied, 'The honourable gentleman calls me a *thing*, and

* The Life and Times of the Right Hon. H. Grattan, by his Son, Henry Grattan, Esq., M.P.—a very unsatisfactory book.

(patting

(patting his ample stomach) an unshapely thing I am; but when he adds *that thing termed a minister*, he calls me that which he himself is most anxious to become, and therefore I take it as a compliment.'

The most striking of the axioms addressed by M. Timon to the ministers of particular departments, is this:—

'Le Ministre de l'Instruction Publique doit savoir parler français.'
—p. 63.

And the main apophthegm in the chapter on 'Diction and Demeanour' is illustrated by General Sebastiani's yellow gloves, which are said to have occupied more of the attention of the Chamber than his dissertations. It is a coincidence worth remarking, that Gratian was guilty of the very same solecism on the occasion of his *début* in the British parliament; his strong accent, strange gestures, and yellow gloves, astonished and amused the House during the first ten minutes, at the end of which period Pitt, who had been listening with intense interest, slapped his thigh emphatically, and exclaimed 'It will do!' If gloves, however, have gone nigh to mar the fortune of some orators, others have occasionally suffered from the want of them. Lord Brougham, during his indefatigable canvass of Yorkshire, in the course of which he often addressed ten or a dozen meetings in a day, thought fit to harangue the electors of Leeds immediately on his arrival, after travelling all night and without waiting to perform his customary ablutions. 'These hands are clean,' cried he, at the conclusion of a diatribe against corruption; but they happened to be very dirty, and this practical contradiction raised a hearty laugh.

M. Cermenin objects to every sort of *coquetterie* in respect of dress, yet no *petite maitresse* preparing for a ball was more finically particular than Lord Chatham preparing for a debate. In the decline of life, or when suffering from the gout, his very flannels were so disposed as to imitate the toga in their folds. Mirabeau, again, was wont to devote a large part of the morning to his favourite valet, Teutsch. His toilette, according to Dumont, was extremely *soignée*: he wore an enormous quantity of hair, artistically arranged, which increased the volume of his head. 'When I shake my terrible locks,' he was wont to say, 'there is no one who dares interrupt me.' Once when Teutsch had incautiously shortened them too much, he sprang up exclaiming—'*Au diable, coquin, vous m'avez gâté pour une quinzaine.*'*

There is yet a chapter entitled 'Precepts of Parliamentary

* In the *Biographie des Contemporains* this anecdote is supported by Lady Holland's authority.

Eloquence; but it contains nothing very striking or new, and we cannot afford space at present for a comparison with the Parliamentary Logic of Hamilton. At least, therefore, we are free to proceed to the Portraits of Orators, to which all the rest of the book must be regarded as introductory. Amongst these, the orators of the Restoration come first; and we should also be inclined to give them precedence in point of execution, for when M. Timon approaches recent times, and has to talk about his own rivals and friends, his feelings not unfrequently get the better of his judgment, his hand grows less steady, his *coup d'œil* less just, and the features transferred to his canvas bear strong evidence of the medium through which they have been viewed. In a word, those of his own party are often flattered, and those of his opponents caricatured; but he hardly ever fails in hitting off the likeness, and this of course is what we are anxious to transfer. In dealing with the rest of the book, therefore, we shall abridge than copy from him; confining ourselves almost exclusively to the parts which we have had the means of verifying, mixing them up with traits or anecdotes collected from other quarters, illustrating the descriptions by specimens.

The principal orators of the Restoration were MM. Manuel, de Serre, de Villele, Martignac, Royer-Collard, Benjamin Constant, and General Foy.

Manuel was above the middle height, with a pale, melancholy countenance, a sonorous voice, a provincial accent, and a great simplicity of manner. Like Erskine, he had served in the army and practised as an advocate. He was born in 1775, and joined the army in 1793 as a volunteer. His courage and conduct soon raised him to the rank of captain, but his health was so much impaired by the severe wounds he had received, that he quitted the military profession after the treaty of Campo-Formio, and attached himself to that of the law, which he followed in Provence with eminent success. So high was his reputation, that, when the Representative Chamber was called together during the Hundred Days, he had the choice of sitting for Aix or for Barcelonnette. Manuel remained a quiet observer until after the battle of Waterloo, when the divisions of the Assembly bade fair to leave France entirely at the mercy of the allies. He then came forward, and in a speech of extraordinary power proposed the recognition of Napoleon the Second; exhorting the several parties to unite at all events to rescue the country from the worst extremes of despotism by exacting a constitution of some sort. This speech was hailed with shouts of applause, and a veteran of the revolution, Cambon, ran up to him, exclaiming, 'This young man begins as Barnave ended.' Thenceforward he became the guiding spirit of the

the Assembly, and under his direction a project of a constitution was prepared. He acted as reporter to the commission, and intrepidly pursued his task until the Prussians were actually entering Paris, when he ascended the tribune to render an account of his trust:

‘What has happened was foreseen by all of you; whatever the rapidity with which events are precipitated, they have not been able to take you by surprise, and already your declaration, based on the profound sense of your duties, has taught France that you know how to fulfil and complete your task. The committee of government has found itself in a position in which it is unable to defend itself; as to us, we are bound to account to our country for all our movements, and, if necessary, for the last drops of our blood. . . . You have protested by anticipation—you protest still—against an act which will wound our liberty and the rights of our constituents. Would you have to dread these evils if king’s promises were otherwise than vain? Well, then, let us say, like that famous orator [Mirabeau] whose words rang through Europe, “*Nous sommes ici par la volonté du peuple; nous n’en sortirons que par la puissance des baïonnettes.*”’

During the next two years he kept aloof from politics, and endeavoured to resume his professional practice; but the Council of Discipline refused to enrol him amongst the advocates of the capital, and he was consequently prevented from pleading causes in the courts, though his opinions on legal questions were eagerly sought for, and very highly esteemed as authorities. So high was his personal credit—at least if we are to believe the *biographies*—that, at the meeting of plenipotentiaries for the general settlement of affairs, one of Fouché’s creatures was introduced, at that wily personage’s suggestion, as Manuel, and the trick was only discovered, long after its partial success, by an accident. In 1818, he was simultaneously chosen by La Vendée and Le Finistère. He gave the preference to La Vendée, and thus the province most attached to the old *regime* was, by an odd coincidence, represented by the most ardent defender of the new. From this period, the exertions of Manuel never relaxed a moment, and they were uniformly directed against what he deemed the undue encroachments of despotism. The friends of order certainly found their most redoubtable antagonist in him; and we believe it must be admitted that they occasionally attempted to put him down by means which it would be no easy matter to justify. He particularly excelled in stating a question or summing up an argument; and he was gifted with a prodigious memory, which enabled him to pass and repass, for the purpose of refuting or enforcing them, all the leading topics employed by both sides in a debate. Conscious of these advantages, he was wont to keep himself in reserve till towards the conclusion of the debate,

debate, and lie in wait for the ministerial leader—much as Lord Brougham used to lie in wait for Canning, and Sheridan for Pitt. Exasperated at this system of tactics, the royalists often tried to silence him by clamour; and in forming an estimate of the ready tact and high moral courage he displayed on such emergencies, it must be borne constantly in mind that he was suffering from a painful disease, and that an English legislative assembly, in its most excited state, conveys but a faint notion of the phrenzied rage which sometimes agitates the French. Mirabeau interrupted at every sentence by an insult, with ‘slanderer,’ ‘liar,’ ‘assassin,’ ‘rascal,’ rattling round him, addresses the most furious of his assailants in the softest tone he can assume:—‘*J’attends, Messieurs, que ces aménités soient épuisées.*’ Repeatedly attacked in the same manner and with nearly the same epithets,* Manuel generally crossed his arms and waited till order was restored; but once when a reproach of peculiar grossness reached his ear, he placed his glass to his eye, and deliberately examined the benches of the right: ‘I challenge the member who has just uttered this indecent exclamation to name himself; but he will not.’ A complete silence ensued, and continued during the remainder of his speech. On another occasion of the kind he paused and expressed himself as follows:—

‘Before proceeding further, I think it my duty to repeat here a declaration I have already had occasion to make from this tribune: it is, that no power on earth shall hinder me, in the position in which I find myself, from saying to the Chamber—to France—to the ministers—the truths I believe useful to the peace of my country, to the safety of the throne, to your own dignity; and I will discharge this sacred duty in despite of clamour, as I would do it in the midst of silence; and experience might by this time have taught our adversaries whether it be easy to impose such sacrifices on me.’

At length an opportunity of getting rid of him altogether presented itself, or, more properly speaking, was forced on. He was replying to Chateaubriand’s celebrated defence of the French invasion of Spain, and had already been called to order for applying the epithet *atrocious* to the government of Ferdinand VII.

‘I had reason to call that government atrocious from 1815 to 1819—what will it be, then, when it has insults to prosecute? Will it be able to guard itself from its own passions, when affairs are entrusted to men who have their exile and their disappointed ambition to revenge?’

This allusion to the emigrants was barely endured, but when he went on to ask—

‘Can you have forgotten, then, that, from the moment foreign powers invaded the French territory, revolutionary France, feeling the necessity of defending herself by new forms and new energy——’

his speech was cut short by a sudden explosion, and nothing was heard but shouts of *'Down! Down!—Turn him out. It is a justification of regicide.'* In vain did Manuel intreat to be allowed to finish his sentence; a hundred voices exclaimed, *'No, no, we will hear no more.'* and his expulsion was moved without delay. In the debates which followed he displayed his characteristic firmness.

'Sent to this tribune to defend the interests of my country, I have fulfilled this hallowed duty, and I tell you plainly that if I continue to appear in it, I shall show neither less frankness nor less devotion; . . . but you wish to drive me from it; that is all you care for. Well, then, pronounce your sentence; I shall make no effort to avoid it. I know that passions must have way; your conduct is marked out for you by that of your predecessors and prototypes.* All that they have done, you will do; the same elements must produce the same results. I shall be your first victim. May I be your last! I shall carry no resentments away with me; but if I could be animated with any desire of revenge, I would confide to your phrenzy the care of avenging me. . . .

'Let others seek to debase the national representation; they have no doubt a guilty interest in doing so. As for myself, urged by a far different sentiment, I will do all that in me lies to preserve its lustre. †

'I declare, then, that I acknowledge in no one here the right to accuse or sentence me—I look for judges elsewhere, and I find nothing but accusers in this place. I expect not an act of justice; it is to an act of vengeance that I resign myself.† I profess respect for the authorities, but I respect still more the law which has established them, and I no longer recognise their power from the moment that, in contempt of this law, they usurp rights that it has not bestowed upon them. In such a state of things, I know not if submission be an act of prudence, but I know that when resistance is a right, it becomes a duty.

Entering this Chamber by the will of those who had the right to send me here, I ought not to leave it but through the violence of those who arrogate the right to exclude me from it; and if this resolution on my part is destined to bring down yet greater perils on my head, I bethink me that the field of liberty has been sometimes fertilised by generous blood.'

He kept his word and refused to quit the Chamber until a gendarme was advancing to collar him, when, conceiving that he had done enough to show that he only yielded to violence, he rose and walked out. He was followed by all the members of his party, exclaiming, *'Take us along with him; we are all Manuel.'* The people received him with acclamations, and addresses poured in from all quarters; but their enthusiasm was

* Alluding to the expulsion of M. Grégoire in 1820.

† 'It is with perfect truth I once more repeat that I have no reason to expect indulgence, nor do I know that I shall meet with bare justice in this house.'—*Four on the Westminster Scrutiny.*

not shared by any of the electoral bodies, and his expulsion proved permanent. He suffered with dignity, but he suffered much. 'You are a man of letters'—was his remark to Benjamin Constant—'you have your pen; but what remains to me?' There remained to him, says M. Timon, a funeral procession and the Pantheon! His last words were addressed to the poet Beranger, who had hardly quitted his bedside for several days: 'Beranger, think of your health; I insist on your going to bed; do not refuse me this last mark of friendship; your refusal would pain me too much.' A few minutes afterwards he expired, August 20, 1827.

M. de Serre (the second on our list) was born in 1777, emigrated early, and served as a common soldier in the army of Condé. On his return to France in 1802, he studied the law, and after gaining considerable reputation as an advocate, was appointed to several high judicial situations by Napoléon. He was chosen deputy for the department of the Upper Rhine in 1815, and joined the constitutionalist or moderate party, which allowed of his occasionally coming to the protection of the ministry:

'Peuple complain that the ministry do not advance. For my part, I am astonished that they can move a single step; every one is paralysed, every one hesitates, when every step may bring an accusation after it; the practice of informing (horrible scourge!) is beginning to infest France: it is time that an office should cease to be a crime, and the confidence of the king a ground of suspicion.'

In the sessions of 1816 and 1817 he was elected President of the Chamber, and in 1818 he was made Keeper of the Seals in the ministry of M. Decazes, whom he refused to abandon at a period (November, 1819) when three of his colleagues seceded on the ground of a proposed law of elections which they conceived unfavourable to liberty. It is on account of his conduct at this crisis and the three subsequent years that the liberal party have thought fit to denounce him as a renegade.

M. de Serre is evidently a great favourite with M. Timon, though we are far from saying that his merits are exaggerated. His greatest is indisputable—that, count, emigrant, royalist, aristocrat as he was, he bravely battled for popular rights against the throne, when the friends of the newly restored dynasty were pushing their advantages too far; and that, when the tables were turned and the liberals were strong enough to act on the offensive, he transferred his banner and stood forth the uncompromising defender of the monarchy. M. de Serre was tall and thin, with a high forehead, straight hair, quick eye, dropping mouth, and the restless physiognomy of a man of hasty passions. Like most excitable speakers, says M. Timon, he hesitated when he began
to

to speak, and you might see from the contraction of his brow, that his ideas were brought together slowly and elaborated with some effort in his brain: but little by little they marshalled themselves, took their bent, and came forth in close order and with wonderful regularity; he bent and panted beneath their weight, and flung them about in magnificent images and picturesque expressions.—

‘A mesure que le peuple désapprend à obéir, le ministère désapprend à gouverner.

‘Une société bien ordonnée est le plus beau temple qu’on puisse élever à l’Eternel.

‘Nous avons vu ce grand peuple chanceler et les convulsions de l’anarchie le saisir.

‘Si, dépouillée de la mousse du temps, la racine de tous les droits pouvait se découvrir à nos yeux, apparaîtraient-ils purs de toute usurpation, de toute souillure ?

‘Si la liberté est pour les Français une corde détendue, l’égalité est une corde toujours frémissante.’

‘La démocratie coule à pleins fonds.’

‘Les tribunaux extraordinaires prennent mal en France.’

‘La loi est le rapport des êtres entre eux. Le droit est l’expression de ces rapports.’

Should these examples disappoint expectation, let it be remembered that no sentences torn from the context can tell with full effect. His exposition of a subject was exceedingly fine, and the following is given as a fair example of his style. His object is to show the inapplicability of the English and American laws of the press to France:—

‘Suppose a population naturally calm and cold, spread over a vast territory, circled by the ocean and the desert, absorbed in the labours of agriculture and trade, as yet independent of the wants of the intellect and the torments of ambition. Divide this population into little states more or less democratic, feebly constituted, without distinction or rank, and you will comprehend how the license of newspapers is tolerable amongst them; that it is even a useful spring of democracy, a stimulant which tears the isolated citizens from their domestic concerns to summon them to the discussion of great public interests.

‘Suppose, again, a kingdom where time has accumulated on a proud aristocracy an influence, dignities, riches, and possessions only less than royal. Here, there wants a bridle to the pride of the great; it is necessary to remind them of what they owe to the throne and the people, to impress on them daily that their influence can only be preserved, as it has been acquired, by science and courage, by patriotism and services. The newspapers, and even their license, are admirable for that: but if you add that this high aristocracy is not insulated in the state, that, below it, successive degrees descend and spread; that these degrees are strongly chained together, indissolubly soldered into a single hierarchy; that all is set in motion by it—government, civil and criminal

minimal justice, administration, police—then let no one be astonished that a society thus organised resists the agitations of the periodical press.'

In moral courage, and the art of giving force to simple, unpremeditated sentences by dint of it, M. de Serre was not inferior to Manuel. 'I was present,' says M. Timon, 'and I think I see him still, when turning towards the Opposition and looking them fixedly in the face, he said, "I have watched you. I have seen through you, I have unmasked you." The Opposition sat quivering with rage. He once told the deputies of the extreme left, "Whatever you may have done for the new interests, you have not done more than I have;" and they remained silent from a conviction that he spoke truth.'

The Court party proved ungrateful, or M. de Serre proved unmanageable, and in 1822 he was condemned to the brilliant exile of an embassy; but, like Manuel, he tried in vain to wean his thoughts from the theatre of his glory, and fairly pined away the remainder of his life. It is said that he had become quite crazy some time before he died at Naples in 1827.

'S'il m'était permis de tenir mon pinceau levé, et d'oublier que je ne trace ice qu'un portrait oratoire, je dirais que M. de Serre était homme de bien, courageux, sincère, intègre, orné de vertus domestiques, trop sensible peut-être! La tribune use rapidement ces organisations nerveuses. Le Général Foy était malade du cœur, C. Périer du foie, et de Serre du cerveau. Les surexcitations de la sensibilité perfectionnent l'orateur, mais tuent l'homme.'

'M. de Serre conçut un violent chagrin de sa répudiation électorale. Sa tête se troubla, et, les yeux tournés vers cette tribune de France encore retentissante des échos de son éloquence et tant regrettée, il mourut.

'Vanité des réputations! Qui se souvient aujourd'hui de M. de Serre? Vanité de son péritre! Qui saurait sans moi, si je n'avais reproduit ses traits, sa physionomie, sa forte et mâle éloquence, si je ne l'avais jeté sur la toile et rendu à la lumière, qui saurait, dans notre âge oublieux, que M. de Serre a vécu, qu'il a comprimé la guerre civile, qu'il a sauvé la monarchie, qu'il a été grand orateur, si grand que, parmi les princes de la tribune moderne, on ne pourrait le comparer qu'à Berryer, si Berryer était comparable à quelque autre?'—vol. i. pp. 118-119.

M. de Villele's place is rather amongst statesmen than orators, and were we to pair and compare the public men of France and England in the manner of Plutarch, we should select M. de Villele and Sir Robert Walpole for a parallel, distinguished as they were by the same aptitude for financial matters, the same tact in conciliating the support of a party or the favour of a king, the same practical good sense, the same absence of enthusiasm, the same disregard for the high sounding names of national honour and patriotism, the same dislike to war, the same fondness for expedients, and pretty nearly the same unscrupulous dexterity

dexterity in the choice of them. Each, again, left the kingdom committed to his charge in apparent prosperity, and each is accused of scattering the seeds of evil for succeeding ministers to reap. But here ends the similarity. Walpole belonged to an ancient family, and was a fine, handsome, portly-looking man.* M^r. de Villele had, perhaps, none of these advantages. He was a little man, with plain, though not inexpressive features;† and the commencement of his fortunes was his marriage with the daughter of a sugar-planter in the Isle of Bourbon, whose estates he was employed to superintend. Prior to this event, however, he had served in the navy, and as he was driven to take refuge in the colonies by the consequences of the revolution, we must not be too hasty in drawing conclusions as to his original position from the circumstance. After distinguishing himself in the colonial assembly, he came (in 1807) to settle in Toulouse, for which place he was chosen deputy in 1815, being then about fifty years of age. On his entrance into the Chamber he immediately took part with the royalists, and even attacked that article of the charter by which the validity of engagements made by the revolutionary government was recognised :

‘ Did these concessions hinder the 20th of March? did they render the revolutionists more submissive or more faithful? If there is no answer to this question, I must say, Gentlemen, let us construct a wall of brass between the past and the future; but let us get out of the rut of the revolution never to re-enter it.’

He became President of the Council in 1821, and managed to retain his office nearly seven years, a very long time for a French ministry to last. The most remarkable event during his government was the occupation of Spain, to which he was personally opposed. The most remarkable of his own measures were the reduction of the funds, and the grant of an indemnity to the emigrants. His defence of the last affords a characteristic example of his system of parliamentary tactics, which consisted rather in evading than repelling an attack :—

‘ A thousand millions!’—exclaimed General Foy—‘ A thousand millions, gentlemen! Why, it is twenty times the amount of the deficit of 1789, which caused the breaking out of the revolution: it is a third more than the ransom to which we were condemned in 1815 by the victory of the foreigner! It is more than would be required to restore all our roads, finish all our canals, reconstruct all our prisons, and raise all the fortresses wanted for the defence of our territories! And those

* He was considered the best-looking of the Knights of the Garter, when they walked in procession, with the exception of Lord Townshend, the handsomest man of his day.

† ‘ C’était un homme d’un port assez vulgaire, grêle, de petite stature, avec des yeux perçants, une voix nasillarde mais accentuée,’ &c.—*Times*, vol. I, p. 120,

who

who would swallow up this thousand million are already far the richest and the best rewarded!—and it is not only the resident cultivators of your soil who will parcel out this prodigal donation amongst themselves: it will be men, once French, whom the chances of emigration have fixed and naturalised in a foreign land: it will be Austrian and Russian generals who have already had their full share of the booty levied in France.*

M. de Villele ascends the tribune with a downcast and melancholy look:

“If the august monarch, founder of the charter, if the king who at present reigns over us had not emigrated”—Here he paused, leaving the fate which would have awaited the two brothers of Louis XVI. to the imagination, whilst the Right responded with a groan—“But we, ourselves, what would have become of us but for the emigration of our princes? Without the emigration of our kings, what should we have had in 1814, and after the hundred days, to oppose to the armies of Europe established in our capital? Our deliverance from a foreign yoke, our public freedom, the prosperity and happiness we enjoy, we owe them all to the emigration which has preserved our princes to us. Let there be an end, then, of the attempt to make a crime of the devotedness and fidelity of those who lost their all to follow them.”

This argument necessarily proved unanswerable in an assembly where royalty and loyalty were then in high fashion. It might not, however, have passed so well under other circumstances. We do not wish to enter here into the general merits of the old *emigration*, but we may be allowed to express our regret at the style in which the example has been imitated of late, and our apprehension of the results. It is well known that the *élite* of the French nobility have refused to take any part in politics since the revolution of the Barricades, and make it their point of honour and their boast to live secluded in their faubourg of St. Germain.*

This minister was succeeded by M. Martignac, who insisted on elevating him and some others of his predecessors to the peerage, by way of rendering harmless the opposition which he apprehended from them. M. de Villele's character may be summed up in the words of Timon:

‘He had no flowers in his style, nor pomp in his ~~images~~, nor vehemence in his declamation, nor clenching power in his logic: but he was clear, full, firm, and reasonable. There never escaped from him in the ardour of debate any of those perilous expressions which the commentator lays hold of, and which afford subjects for the ridicule of the press. If Nature had denied him the gifts, more brilliant than solid, of

* The novels of Count, Horace de Viel Castal are directed against this peculiar folly of the French exclusives, and contain some curious information regarding them. It seems that no one is considered *par* who visits out of the faubourg, or takes any part in the active concerns of life.

imagination

imagination and eloquence, she had given him, in a very high degree, that prompt *coup d'œil* of the statesman who sees quick and sees true. No, he was no common man,—who struggled so long without disadvantage during his long ministry, against Manuel, Foy, Lafitte, Dupont de l'Eure, Chauvelin, Bignon, and Benjamin Constant, and (an equally trying contest) against the demands of the court and those of his own friends.'—*Ib.* p. 121.

General Foy was the representative of the anti-monarchical, anti-aristocratical, anti-legitimist tendencies of France; and his success in the tribune is justly attributed in part to the same popular feeling which distinguished Beranger amongst poets and Paul Louis Courier amongst pamphleteers. The military character was also an advantage to him, as it enlisted all the warlike sympathies of his countrymen in his favour. Foy was born in 1775, and entered the army as soon as he was able to bear arms. He served by turns under almost all the republican generals who have earned a place in history, and succeeded in attracting the attention of most of them by feats of daring and a knowledge of the art of war far exceeding what is expected from a subaltern. In the campaign of 1799, as Massena was passing the bridge across the Rhine, his face wore an expression of anxiety. 'What is the matter, General?' said Foy, then a colonel—'all succeeds to a miracle; the enemy is not aware of our passage.' 'I see Suwarrow, who is turning me.' 'You will have beaten Korsakoff before Suwarrow can *débouche* upon you,' replied Foy; and the prediction was verified. His generosity and frankness were equally remarkable. When requested to procure the signatures of his corps to an address of congratulation to Buonaparte, he replied, 'I will congratulate the First Consul as much as he likes on having escaped a conspiracy against his life, but I will never sign, I will never make my officers sign, an address which designates such or such individuals as authors or chiefs of this conspiracy, because I am a soldier, and I am not a judge.' When a man with this sort of reputation begins his oratorical career by exclaiming, 'There is an echo in France when we pronounce the names of honour and country,' he will seldom lack auditors; and there is a force, independent of the rhetoric, in such appeals as the following:—

'Nineteen-twentieths of those who drew the sword during the hundred days in defence of their country had in no respect contributed to the success of the 20th of March: they marched, as their fathers had marched twenty-three years before, at the cry of Europe combined against France. Would you have liked it better if, for the first time, we had halted in front of our enemies and demanded how many of them there were? We ran to Waterloo, like the Greeks to Thermopylæ; all without fear, and almost all without hope. It was the accomplishment

complishment of a magnanimous sacrifice; and that is the reason why this recollection, painful as it may be, has remained as precious to us as the most glorious of the rest.'

At the same time, if tradition and M. Timon are to be credited, there is no necessity for examining the secondary causes of General Foy's success. He had the exterior, the bearing and the gestures of an orator, a vast memory, a powerful voice, eyes sparkling with intelligence, and a chivalrous *tournure* about the head. His swelling forehead kindled with enthusiasm or contracted with anger. 'Then (says M. Timon) he struck the marble of the tribune, and there was in him a little of the sibyl on her tripod. Often was he seen to spring impulsively from his seat and scale the tribune, as if he was advancing to victory. When there, he flung forth his words with a haughty air, like Condé flinging his baton of command over the doubts of the enemy.' (p. 129.) In the succeeding passage great injustice is done to General Foy. He is described as not improvising his speeches; and the proof is, that he carefully meditated them, and distributed the parts; that he did in short what, as already intimated, all first-rate orators must do. He is said, moreover, to have paved the way for a dramatic effect, a catching figure, a happy expression, with remarkable adroitness—another proof of his proficiency in the most difficult branches of the art. At all events, most of his recorded sayings have all the appearance of impromptus. When told to carry his foreign news to the Bourse, he retorted—

'I know nothing of the gambling of the Bourse: for my part, I speculate in nothing but the rise of the national honour.'

On its being stated that the commissioners of the censorship had been put on half-pay—

'If that be true, I hope they will be treated as half-pay officers have been for the last two years—I hope they will never be called into active service again.'

When asked what he meant by aristocracy—

'L'aristocratie? je vais vous le dire: l'aristocratie, c'est la ligue, la coalition de ceux qui veulent consommer sans produire, vivre sans travailler, occuper toutes les places sans être en état de les remplir, envahir tous les honneurs sans les avoir mérités—voilà l'aristocratie!'

In reply to a defence of pensions and sinecures:

'Faites-nous donc connaître vos diplomates qui n'ont servi ni avant, ni après, ni pendant notre héroïque révolution; vos pensions accordées à celui-ci pour qu'il fasse un livre, à celui-là pour qu'il n'en fasse pas; vos médecins, qui n'ont jamais de malades à soigner; vos historio-graphes, qui n'ont pas d'histoire à écrire; vos paysagistes, qui n'ont pas d'autre paysage à peindre que le jardin de l'hôtel de Wagram.'

An

An apostrophe addressed to M. de Serre has great merit :

‘ As my sole revenge, as your sole punishment, I simply condemn you to turn your eyes, as you leave this place, on the statues of L’Hôpital and Daguesseau.’

His industry was indefatigable, and there was hardly any subject of public interest which he had not mastered down to its minutest details. When warned of the necessity of repose by his physicians, he exclaimed, ‘ Cease to work ?—it would be my death.’ He died in 1825,—in M. Timon’s opinion most opportunely for his fame.

‘ Combien de fois Napoléon n’a-t-il pas regretté d’avoir vécu trop d’un jour ? oh, comme il enviait, sur le rocher de Sainte-Hélène, le destin du soldat qui fut tué par le premier boulet de Waterloo ? La fortune, au contraire, en l’ensevelissant dans le sein de ses triomphes oratoires, n’a pas voulu que le Général Foy perdit rien de sa noble et pure renommée. S’il eût vécu, il eût été courtisan de Louis-Philippe, Ministre de la guerre, Maréchal de France, Connétable, peut-être. Il a mieux fait de mourir.’—vol. i. pp. 142-143.

M. de Martignac was born in 1770, of an ancient family, at Bourdeaux. At an early age he distinguished himself at the bar, and wrote some successful pieces for the theatre. It has been asserted that he was secretary to Sièyes during his Berlin embassy in 1798, and that in 1811 he published an ode on the birth of the King of Rome. Be this as it may, he was certainly amongst the warmest supporters of the Bourbons at the Restoration, and when elected a member of the Chamber (in 1821) he distinguished himself no less by his constitutional opinions than by his eloquence. After filling some other posts with credit, he was made Premier on the breaking up of the Villele cabinet, but proving too liberal, or rather too little of a bigot, for Charles X., he was dismissed in 1829, and succeeded by the far-famed authors of the Ordinances. He died in 1832.

M. de Martignac is one of the few royalist, rational, constitutional statesmen whom it is the fashion for the Movement party to praise. He owes this distinction partly to what he did towards the emancipation of the press, partly to the graceful insinuating address by which he managed to flatter the self-love and conciliate the good-will of all parties. His voice is described as that of a syren, his elocution as combining the softness and harmony of the lyre ; the cultivation of letters had refined his style, and the habits of society had given the last air of polish to his gestures and his mien. Yet thus accomplished, he seduced rather than commanded the attention ; and whilst his discourses are models of elegance, ingenuity, dexterous management, and apt exposition, they are ever and anon open to the reproach of feebleness, and there

there is scarcely one vehement apostrophe or condensed piece of logic to be found in them. The finest act of M. de Martignac's life was the closing one—his volunteer defence of M. de Polignac. The following passages from the peroration of his speech are exactly calculated to give a true notion of his style in his loftier moods:—

‘Peers of the realm, the act you are about to do is the one to which the determination of the character of the revolution of 1830, and the decision of its fate, is reserved. The judgment that France awaits from you has, then, for her all the interest of a prediction, all the power of a destiny.

‘Is it by the death of disarmed adversaries that the revolution of 1830 would consummate its work? Will it diverge, at this point, from the career it has nobly struck out for itself, and arrive, by so different a road, at the abyss in which our first revolution was lost? I cannot fear it, my lords, since it is from you that it is about to receive direction and example. Our manners are growing milder; philanthropy is making daily advances towards new conquests; a legislation is preparing which will conciliate, so far as our age permits, the interest of the common safety with the aspirations of humanity. Already for many months our public places have not been saddened by the spectacle of a scaffold. What ought not to be the pressing interest, the real want, the possible advantage to our country, which, in a political prosecution unexpectedly occurring after so many vicissitudes endured in so small a number of years, should be of power sufficient to determine you to put this suspended axe in motion again? *Is not all complete? Has not the dynasty gone down with the throne? Do not vast seas separate you from it, and events more vast than they?* What need has France of the death of a man who places himself in your hands,—*the broken instrument of a power that is no more?* To prove her strength? Who contests it, who can bring it into doubt, and what sort of proof of it would it be to strike a victim who has no means of defence but one feeble voice? To satisfy her vengeance? Ah, my lords, this prostrate throne, these three crowns broken in as many days, *this flag of eight centuries rent to pieces in an hour*, is not all this the vengeance of a victorious people? *This* was conquered in the midst of peril, illustrated by the end, and ennobled by bravery: *that* would be but barbarous, for it is no longer contested or necessary. Is it to ensure the triumph of the victorious people and consolidate their work that the execution of an individual could be required? Ah! that which ~~four~~ has conquered or regained is not to be preserved by cruelty or violence; it is the firm but temperate use of the power which has changed hands, the feeling of security to which this moderation gives rise, the prosperity it fosters, the protection which the new order of things promises to those who submit or attach themselves to it,—these are the true elements of conservation—the others are but fatal illusions, destructive to those who embrace them. You are laying the foundations of a new throne—do not give it for its base a soil soaked with blood and tears.’

These

These passages are finely conceived, but the execution falls short of the design; the thought is spread over too large a surface; the sentences (with a few exceptions) are diffuse and languid; the condensing power of genius is altogether wanting, and we long in vain for point, force, directness, or simplicity. Altogether the peroration reminds us of those written by Dumont for Mirabeau, before the master's hand had been at work infusing that force and energy, that '*quelque chose de vif et tranchant*,' by which the productions of others became essentially his own.

M. Royer-Collard's reputation is rather personal, literary, moral and political, than oratorical; he very seldom extemporises; it is consequently as a thinker, not as a speaker, that he influences, and his actions have been as expressive as his words. In the published accounts of him, therefore, we find nothing about his person, his manner, or his voice: the whole turns off the depth of his thoughts, the comprehensiveness of his views, the upright tenor of his life, and the undeviating consistency of his principles.

'M. Royer-Collard (says M. Timon, and the passage need neither be amplified nor abridged) is the patriarch of the constitutional royalists of the Restoration. He was the most eloquent of our parliamentary writers. He had a vast and magnificent kind of style. A word, a single axiom fructified by the meditation of this strong brain, swelled, thickened, grew up like an acorn that becomes an oak, all whose ramifications spring from the same trunk, and which, animated by the same life, nourished with the same sap, forms but one whole, despite the variety of its foliage and the endless multiplicity of its boughs. Such were the discourses of M. Royer-Collard, admirable for the unity of their principle, the vigorous shoots of their style, and the beauty of their form. It was philosophy applied to politics, with its abstract and somewhat obscure formulæ. More profound than vehement, more original in the expression than capable of carrying you away by the movement, M. Royer-Collard was (if the expression be forgiven me) a digger of ideas: he was a speaking thought.'—vol. i. p. 150.

He was born in 1763 of an honourable family, and at the breaking out of the revolution was a member of the metropolitan bar. He joined the royalist party, and played an active part in politics for a time, when, becoming an object of suspicion to the dominant faction, he found it necessary to withdraw into retirement for a season.*. In 1811 his rising reputation as a writer and metaphysician attracted the attention of Napoleon, who appointed him Dean of the Faculty of Letters and Professor of the History

* He was one of the chosen few who kept up a correspondence with the Bourbons, and was charged with the care of their interests when the revolutionary government was in full force and activity.

of Modern Philosophy. After the second Restoration, he was named president of the committee of public instruction, and in 1815 he was elected a member of the Chamber, where he has uniformly pursued a *juste milieu* line of politics. His reputation reached the highest pitch in 1827, when he was simultaneously chosen by seven constituencies, named President of the Chamber, and elected a member of the Academy. His advanced age has gradually diminished the number of his public appearances for some years past, and a story was current at Paris a few months ago amusingly illustrative of the present character of his pursuits and interests. When Victor Hugo was an aspirant for the honours of the Academy, and called on M. Royer-Collard to ask his vote, the sturdy veteran professed an entire ignorance of his name. 'I am the author of *Notre Dame de Paris*, *Les Derniers Jours d'un Condamné*, *Bug-Jargal*, *Marion Delorme*, &c.' 'I never heard of any of them.' 'Will you do me the honour of accepting a copy of my works?' 'I never read new books.' *Exit Hugo!*

The name of *Benjamin Constant* has become familiar in this country through his connexion with Madame de Staël, some passages of which he is said to have depicted in a novel;* but he has higher and better claims to our sympathy, since his grand aim through life was to make English institutions understood and appreciated in France. France was only his country by adoption. He was born (1767) at Lausanne, and had studied both at Edinburgh and Göttingen. He came to Paris in 1795, and speedily attracted attention by a series of pamphlets, which he threw off with wonderful facility at that as at every other period of his life. But the chief theatre of his early honours was the Tribunat, where he exasperated Napoleon to the highest pitch by opposing the most cherished of his schemes: 'There are below there, in that Tribunat,' said the First Consul, 'a dozen or fifteen metaphysicians fit to be thrown into the water. They are a vermin which keep sticking to my clothes; but I will shake them off.' Shortly afterwards he executed this threat by turning out Constant, Chenier, Guingène, and others. 'Nous vous avons *epurés*,' was the apology to the remaining members. 'Say *écrémés*,' was the sharp retort of Madame de Staël. From this period Constant and Madame de Staël appear to have vowed a common hatred to Napoleon, as well as a mutual affection for one another; but at the commencement of the Hundred Days a single inter-

* Talleyrand used to say that it was not very difficult to win women, but that the grand problem was how to get rid of them afterwards. This is the immoral moral of *Adolphe*,—the story of a man pursued by a woman (Ellenore) ten years older than himself, of whom he has become thoroughly tired. It was generally understood that Madame de Staël was the heroine, and Constant (whose nature ill accorded with his name) the hero of the tale.

view succeeded to effect a signal change in the opinions of the gentleman. M. Constant came forth from his first private interview a complete convert—and counsellor of state. This is the dark spot in his life. He has thus attempted to wipe it off:—

‘It is true I had written all that; under the empire of a generous hatred, I had uttered these maledictions against a despot; but when I saw France menaced by the foreigners, when I saw the Prussians, the English, the Austrians, the Russians, crossing our frontiers a second time, I thought it right—yielding to a juster and more generous sentiment—to forget—to fly to the support of the man who, in this extremity, could still save the country.’

His oratorical career did not recommence until 1819, when he was elected by the department of La Sarthe, and his speeches betoken no falling away from the principles he originally professed. ‘We are a generation of passage,’ was his cry; ‘we fight that others may triumph;’ and on every occasion that presented itself he was found calling to the government for the time being to move on. His characteristic qualities, both as a writer and a speaker, were spirit, ingenuity, and fertility. His foot was ever in the stirrup, his fancy was ever on the wing—to-day an article, to-morrow a pamphlet, the next day a speech. He had such a command of language, that when he chanced to displease his audience by an expression, he would go on substituting synonyms till he had suited them. For example: ‘I am anxious to spare the Crown’—a murmur—‘the Monarch’—the murmurs continue—‘the Constitutional King’—the murmurs are hushed. His inpromptu replies often betoken not merely readiness but wit. Of the deputies who had made a verbose defence of sinecures, he said: ‘They economise neither money nor words.’ When the ministerial party complained that, if such attacks continued, it would be impossible to find functionaries, ‘Don’t be afraid of discouraging aspirants to office, their courage is inexhaustible. When a prefecture is vacant, do people run away for fear of being condemned to it?’ Speaking of the ministry—‘It is as impossible, in all that regards arbitrary power, to calumniate as to soften them.’

■ He composed on cards tied together with a string, each containing a paragraph. Probably this habit influenced his style, which was deficient in continuity. The following has been extolled as a good example of the suddenness of his transitions, and the vividness of his apostrophes:—

‘I have always regarded as worthy of envy the fate of those friends of freedom who, at the commencement of the revolutionary phrenzy, were struck down the first. This destiny has saved them from being the witnesses of another phrenzy still more frightful. The fate of those
who

who may be the first victims of the counter-revolution, if it ~~could~~ pass, would appear to me equally deserving of envy: they will not see this counter-revolution in all its horrors. Gentlemen, two roads have been open to you for two years past: even when the ministry lost their way, the representatives of the people chose the constitutional path. Do you wish to pass again under laws of exception? The Convention, the Directory, Buonaparte, have governed by exceptional laws. Where is the Convention? Where is the Directory? Where is Buonaparte?*

But the press was his favourite topic: 'The press is the tribune enlarged; speech is the vehicle of intelligence, and intelligence is the mistress of the world.' On this subject he has written and spoken volumes; and whoever has occasion to write or speak upon it, may confidently repair to his writings and speeches as to an armoury where every sort of weapon may be procured. Benjamin Constant was rather above the middle height, of a weak frame of body, with thin legs, long arms, and an habitual stoop. His hair (originally fair, but when we saw him grey) was worn very long, and fell down upon his shoulders, after the fashion of a German student. When a young man, he had been reckoned very handsome. His mode of reciting was monotonous, and something like a stammer was occasionally observable in his delivery. He commonly leant both hands on the tribune when he was extemporising, and used little action of any kind. His personal courage was displayed in a remarkable manner in his duel with M. des Issarts. Both being equally incapacitated from fighting upon their legs, they were placed in chairs at the proper distance, and exchanged two shots a-piece—luckily without effect. Benjamin Constant died in 1830.

With Constant concludes the catalogue of orators of the Restoration. The portraits of living speakers are so numerous, that we must proceed much in the same manner as in a picture-gallery,—walk round and look at all, but confine our critical examination to a few.

M. Berryer, the leader of the legitimist party, is, by common consent of all parties, the first of living orators in France. Towards the end of his first session (1830), one of his colleagues exclaimed to Royer-Collard, '*Voilà un beau talent!*' '*Dites donc une puissance,*' was the reply.

For much of his acknowledged pre-eminence he is undoubtedly indebted to physical advantages: to his face, his figure, and (above all) his voice, an *organ* of extraordinary power and compass, which he manages with unrivalled ease and propriety. But,

* What stuff! as if they fell by the laws of exception! Yet the fact is very near, though Constant would not see it. They all fell because the revolutionary spirit—which necessitated laws of exception—was too strong for them, because their government had no solid base. The laws of exception were one of the symptoms, and in no degree a cause.

as M. Thiers bears willing testimony, he is also a master in rhetoric; and nothing can well be finer than the mode in which he marshals his arguments, manages his transitions, lays the train for an effect, or works his way towards his main object from afar—except perhaps the parenthetical allusions by which he revives the flagging attention of the Chamber, or the vivid bursts and apostrophes by which he rouses the dormant enthusiasm of the royalists. It seems a matter of perfect indifference to him whether he has to speak a prepared speech or an extempore one; for he can invest the latter with all the charms of order, and give the full force of suddenness, vivacity, and felicitous adaptation to the first. In the power of stripping off the husk of a question and going at once to the pith, he nearly resembles Lord Lyndhurst: in his mode of dealing with facts, dates, and passages of by-gone debates, Sir Robert Peel. Lord Stanley may serve to convey some notion of him in the act of repelling an attack or following up an advantage; and Sir William Follett presents an improved example of the kind of logic he employs in his argumentative displays. In looking through the pages of the ‘Moniteur’ (the least imperfect record of the parliamentary eloquence of France) for illustrations of Berryer, we are forcibly reminded of a passage in Erskine’s letter to the editor of Fox’s speeches, prefixed to the complete octavo edition:—

‘Eloquence which consists more in the dexterous structure of periods, and in the powers and harmony of delivery, than in the extraordinary vigour of the understanding, may be compared to a human body, not so much surpassing the dimensions of ordinary nature, as remarkable for the symmetry and beauty of its parts:—if the short-hand writer, like the statuary or painter, has made no memorial of *such* an orator, little is left to distinguish him; but, in the most imperfect relics of Fox’s speeches, *the bones of a giant are to be discovered.*’

The bones of a giant are likewise to be discovered in the most imperfect reliques of Berryer’s, but so cracked and broken, so mixed up and encrusted with adventitious matter, that an art resembling that of the restorer of ancient statues would be required to render them presentable as specimens. We shall therefore content ourselves with one—the concluding passage of his masterly but not quite honest attack on the French ministry in January last. We say not quite honest, for though sheltering himself all the while under the doctrine that a government should be faithful to its principle however false, he, the legitimist leader, was hardly justified in assailing them for not taking part against legitimacy in every quarter of the globe:—

‘I go round the map of France, and I demand at all points where we touch, what are their feelings towards us. I see, in the south, Spain torn

born by two parties, who both, on the day of their reconciliation, will be your enemies; in the north, Belgium, that you have not supported, that you have betrayed, in its movement of July—Belgium, which are unable to support in its generous sentiments. Spain!—you have repelled her. Italy!—if there yet remain in her bosom any friends, of your system, of your principles, of your policy, do you believe that they will stir themselves for you? No, you are abandoned on all sides, you are isolated, and to this (turning to the ministry) have you reduced France. *My hand shall wither before it casts into that urn a ball to say that such a policy is conservative of our alliances, that such a ministry is jealous of our dignity—never, never.*

Bearing in mind that this is the close of a comprehensive view of the foreign relations of the country—we should be inclined to give it a place not much below Lord Chatham's somewhat similar burst—'Were I an American, as I am an Englishman, whilst a foreign troop was quartered on my country, I would never lay down my arms—never, never.' An ironical remark of the Minister to the effect that this declaration would create no disappointment, as they had never reckoned on his vote, called up Berryer again:—

'If you return to power, whatever be the distance that ought naturally to subsist between us, only do for France something useful, honourable, great, and I will applaud you—because, after all, I was born in France, and I wish to die a Frenchman.'

Berryer is the son of the celebrated advocate of the same name, the author of an interesting work recently published entitled *Souvenirs de M. Berryer, Doyen des Avocats de Paris, de 1774 à 1838*. He himself has conducted some important causes with high credit, and, had he not been turned aside from his professional career by politics, nothing could well have prevented him from now enjoying a large and lucrative practice at the bar. His sacrifices in this respect are justly appreciated amongst his friends; and it being understood, not long since, that his circumstances were embarrassed, a tribute of gratitude, similar to that conferred on Grattan by the Irish parliament, was paid him by the legitimist party. They made him a present of a sum of money sufficient to enable him to buy in the château of Augerville, which he had been compelled to advertise for sale, though constituting the bulk of his qualification as deputy. He is about fifty years of age.

M. Dupin (hardly second to Berryer in parliamentary celebrity) is the Erskine of France, and something more; for he has not only defended Ney and Sir Robert Wilson, but held the fate of ministries between his hands. Beranger said of him—'*Il monte quelquefois aux cieux, mais toujours bien crotté.*' He said of himself—'*Je ne saurois jamais entrer dans le cabinet d'un roi avec*

avec mes souliers de paysan. These sayings correctly indicate the style of the orator and the character of the man, though the figure of the countryman's shoes is a bold one, M. Dupin being, in fact, the descendant of an old legal family. He is rough, bold, impulsive, irregular, fanciful, figurative, anecdotal, sarcastic, allusive, and imaginative. The highest compliment is that paid him with innocent unconsciousness by M. Timon—that he is best in the best causes. Let a trait of nobleness or an attempt at oppression come across him in his most uncongenial moods, and a responsive chord will assuredly be struck. Thus, in his defence of Sir Robert Wilson, Mr. Bruce, and Mr. Hutchinson for aiding Lavalette to escape:—

‘Unhappy fruit of our dissensions! Evil is become so common, and good actions are so rare, that people are no longer willing to believe in virtue, nor can persuade themselves that three men are to be found, generous enough to save another, simply from a sentiment of humanity! How manners change with times! At Athens—the people of which are cited for their levity, but the Areopagus was celebrated for its justice—a young man was condemned to death for having killed a dove, which, pursued by a sparrowhawk, flew to take refuge in his bosom. They thought that he who was without pity would never prove a good citizen. And amongst us, in the nineteenth century, men are to be condemned for having saved the life of another man who placed his fate in their hands!’

Or in his reply to the Procureur-General, who, on Ney's trial, had proposed to exclude all reference to antecedent events:—

‘You wish to place his head under the thunderbolt; we wish to show how the tempest has been brewed.’

It is in the act of uttering this apostrophe that Horace Vernet has painted him. The picture would form a capital match for the well-known one of Lord Brougham, exclaiming with uplifted hands ‘Am I in a court of justice?’

The following extract from his defence of Beranger appears to us to afford a fairer specimen of his manner than any of his political speeches. We are sorry that we cannot quote it without expressing the strongest disapprobation of much of its tone as regards the most grave subjects:—

‘I arrive at the last song, to which the Advocate-General has attached more weight than to all the rest. It is that entitled *Le Bon Dieu*, the burden of which is,—

“Si c'est par moi qu'ils règnent de la sorte,
Je veux que le Diable m'emporte.”

Here, gentlemen of the jury, it was deemed a duty to introduce a pompous eulogy on religion, and vaunt its happy influence on the lot of states. I own that, if the question to be resolved were such, I should not be opposed to the public prosecutor. Religion is the want of all: the wretched feel the necessity for it, still more than others; and those

who are out of place, pray to God with as much fervour as those who are in. If religion were outraged, I should say, woe, woe to those who outrage it! But I say at the same time, woe to those who pervert it! Woe to those who would fain make of it only an object of lucre, and only speak of it upon speculation; who put personal revenge in the place of charity, and treat with inexorable rigour what God himself would treat with benignity. Certainly, I will own it, the burden is a little light; but can it be said that it was composed with the intention of apostrophising God himself and outraging him?

‘We must not lose sight of the licence of poetry, nor contest the use it has been able to make of a fact which we find in the Scriptures. Anything may happen when God wills or permits it! Iterum assumpsit Jesum Diabolus in montem excelsum valdè, et ostendit ei omnia regna mundi, et gloriam eorum, et dixit ei: Hæc omnia tibi dabo si cadens adoraveris me.

‘So far Sacred History—what has poetry made of it? Milton, that sombre and sublime genius, has devoted the strains of his *Paradise Lost* to describing the impious war of Satan against the Divinity. He makes us be present at the councils of the angel of darkness. We hear the harangues of demons; the strife is prolonged; he long balances the force and the resistance! Did any one ever dream of taxing Milton with impiety, because he had put the infernal spirit *aux prises* with the Divinity?

The same poet, in his *Paradise Regained*, represents to us the devil taking Jesus Christ, one while to the pinnacle of the temple, and one while to a high mountain, from whence they behold all the people of the earth. Satan shows him the Britons half subjugated, and preserving only the shadow of their ancient liberty; Gaul disarmed; Germany in darkness; Italy still smoking with the blood of its citizens, shed by the emperors with the aid of civil discords; Greece struggling with her chains, impatiently enduring the yoke of conquest; the Parthians make an effort on the side of Asia; the Scythians are already assembling their numerous battalions, and threatening to invade the banks of the Bosphorus! and in his own country, the proconsuls of Rome!—Herod, who to reach a single child, has devoted all to death; and Pilate, pusillanimous functionary, who, ere long, will suffer innocent blood to be poured out, and who will bathe his hands in it!

‘Assuredly, at seeing the world thus governed, Jesus might well have exclaimed, that it was not by Him, nor by his Father, that nations were governed *de la sorte*!’

‘The reporter of this speech (who had probably never heard *Or the Paradise Regained* before) tells us, with inimitable calmness, that nothing of the sort is to be found in Milton, and eulogises Dupin for his readiness in inventing such a scene—the allusions and the real *drift* of which he does not seem to have in the slightest degree apprehended.*

* See some remarks on this speech in an article on Beranger's *Chansons*, *Quarterly Review*, vol. xlii. p. 465, &c.

Dupin's own notions of the advantages and disadvantages of improvisation will not be considered out of place in this article. The passage (which would lose greatly in translation) is taken from his Inaugural Discourse on being chosen a member of the French Academy in August, 1834:—

‘Invoquons de grands souvenirs et de grands exemples! Nos orateurs politiques les plus renommés, Mirabeau, Barnave, de Serre, le général Foy, n'ont-ils pas prouvé que celui qui s'abandonne au milieu de ces circonstances ardentes à tous les hasards de l'improvisation, trouve quelquefois, dans l'embarras même de sa situation, des secours inespérés?

‘Quoique non préparé sur les mots, s'il connaît bien les choses, s'il sent vivement, s'il est soutenu par la conscience du bien, au milieu même de tant d'isolement—dans ce trouble incessamment apporté au développement de sa pensée par les interruptions les plus vives et les clameurs parfois les plus insensées—dans ce tourment de toutes ses facultés, il lui arrivera de rencontrer des tours, des expressions, des hardiesses qui ne viendraient pas trouver une homme moins fortement excité.

‘Ce que perdront le style et la belle ordonnance, l'orateur le regagnera du côté de l'action, de cette action oratoire à laquelle les anciens accordaient les trois premiers rangs. *Sa main ne tiendra pas un cahier; son œil ne sera pas fixé sur son écriture*, il retrouvera l'arme du regard; son esprit ne sera pas livré aux incertitudes de la mémoire; libre dans son allure comme ces cavaliers Numides qui montaient à crê et sans frein, il luttera corps à corps avec son auditoire; maître de retenir ou de laisser aller son discours, de glisser sur ce qui commencerait à déplaire comme d'insister sur ce qui aura fait sensation; et, s'il est bien inspiré, son succès dépassera l'effet des discours les plus étudiés! Alors éclateront ces vives sympathies, ces retours électriques de l'assemblée sur l'orateur, qui l'avertiront qu'il a conquis les votes, et que la majorité vient à lui!’

We were present at the delivery of this discourse. When Dupin entered the hall, buttoned up in the unbecoming uniform of the Academy, he looked anything but at his ease, nor was the principal task imposed upon him—that of reading a written eulogium on Cuvier—of a character to restore him to himself. It was therefore a *bonne* affair till he arrived at the above passage; when a sudden change came over him, his eye began to kindle, his features were lighted up, his whole form appeared dilating, and as *Sa main ne tiendra pas un cahier* rang sonorously through the hall we began to think that the action would accompany the words, and that he was going to dash his own manuscript in the rosy face of the President (M. Jouy). The effect was electrical: it was the triumph of nature over art, or, more correctly speaking, the triumph of that perfect art which produces all its greatest effects by concealing itself: the coldest, for the

moment, abandoned their assumed postures of apathy, and plaudits, loud and long, burst forth at the conclusion of the paragraph. M. Dupin must be heard again and again to be appreciated.

His political career commenced in the Chamber of Representatives in 1815, where he boldly defended the right of the nation to choose its constitution and its rulers. He was not elected a member of the Chamber of Deputies till 1828, since which time he has played a prominent part on the stage of public life, which no man can well do in France without exposing himself to a tolerable share of calumny and misrepresentation; particularly when he professes a moderate line of politics, and occasionally lashes back the more forward and violent of all parties. Dupin has even repudiated those who might be anxious to adopt him as their chief. When called the general of the *tiers-parti*, he said, 'You would render me a service if you would have the goodness to give me a list of the members who compose the *tiers-parti*; I know them not.' The imputations most vehemently reiterated are an alleged secret understanding with the Jesuits, and a want of firmness during the Revolution of July. Nothing can be conceived more futile than these imputations. It seems that M. Dupin had taken a warm part against the Jesuits. Two of his hits have grown into axioms: '*C'est une épée dont la poignée est à Rome, et la pointe partout*;' and '*Protée n'est qu'une fable, le Jesuitisme est la réalité*.' It is not asserted that he has actually done or said anything as a public man at variance with these opinions, but during the period of his avowed hostility he was guilty of the indiscretion of paying a visit to the Jesuit institution at St. Acheul, from motives thus illustrated by himself—'If I had lived at the time when Æneas descended into the infernal regions, I should have wished to descend along with him, and be present at one of Minos' sittings.' From the bare fact of this visit, it is inferred that he must have had an unworthy object in view. The other charge is equally groundless. On the first appearance of the ordinances, the journalists came in a body to consult M. Dupin as to their legality, Odilon-Barrot, Barthe, and Merilhou, being present at the consultation. Their joint opinion was delivered by Dupin, who added, that in his opinion no journal which submitted to the prescribed terms would deserve to retain a single subscriber. The journalists then proposed to come to some resolution as to the precise line of conduct to be pursued, to which Dupin objected. 'But,' said one of them, 'we understood we came here to hold a political meeting.' 'In that case,' said Dupin, 'you are deceived: here, I am no longer a deputy, I am an advocate; you have desired a consultation, you have got one, and you may now do what you like with it.'

Can

Can anything be more reasonable than this distinction, or is a barrister to be accused of cowardice because he does not choose to put his life and honour in the hands of an heterogeneous body of newspaper writers? In moments of real danger, M. Dupin was never wanting to himself. During the riots of June, M. Mauguin came to him one morning, and said, 'I know from good authority that you are to be attacked to-day: it will be prudent to keep away, and not expose yourself.' The reply was in these words: 'I have some pressing matters to despatch: at twelve o'clock I shall go to the Council of Ministers; at two, I shall go to the Chamber; at five, I shall return to my own house, and I shall then expect these gentlemen.' M. Dupin is a homely-looking man, neither tall nor short, of plain manners, *brusque* address, and approaching sixty years of age. The Baron Charles Dupin, the celebrated statistical writer, and M. Philippe Dupin, an advocate of high reputation, are his brothers. Mirabeau's brother, the *Vicomte*, used to say of himself that he would be reckoned a rake and a wit in any family but theirs. The remark is partially applicable to the Dupins;* but the Baron Charles is treated with peculiar freedom, it must be owned, by M. Timon:—

'La manufacture de Saint-Gobain vient de couler une glace monstre d'un seul morceau, ayant 195 pouces de hauteur sur 138 pouces de large. Il ne faudrait pas à M. Charles Dupin une feuille de papier de dimension moindre pour écrire, d'une écriture fine et serrée, sans blanc ni marge, chacun de ses rapports.

'On dit que c'est lui qui a fourni le modèle des plumes de Perry, qui sont d'un acier fin et bien trempé, qu'on ne taille jamais, et avec lesquelles il peut écrire depuis l'aube du jour jusqu'au coucher du soleil, sans perdre une minute.

'On assure également que la presse à bras ne marchant pas assez vite pour le suivre, on a été obligé d'inventer la presse à la vapeur. Grâce soient rendues à M. Charles Dupin d'avoir été l'heureuse occasion de cette découverte! Aussi, la presse à la vapeur n'a-t-elle pas été ingrate, et depuis ce temps-là ne fonctionne-t-elle presque que pour lui.

'M. Charles Dupin cumule les mots, ce qui est stérile pour nous, et les emplois, ce qui est productif pour lui. Il est, en France, à-peu-près tout ce qu'on peut y être. Il y a l'emploi d'ingénieur, l'emploi de membre de l'amirauté, l'emploi d'académicien, celui-ci double, l'emploi de professeur au conservatoire, l'emploi de conseiller d'état, l'emploi de pair de France, l'emploi de rapporteur inamovible du budget de la marine, l'emploi d'attacher à sa boutonnière des brochettes de croix, et l'emploi de baron, de haut baron. Il est, aux Colonies, délégué sans travail mais non sans appointements. Il est, en Suède, chevalier des ordres de royaume, et les voyageurs qui viennent d'Italie disent que le

* The inscription on their mother's tomb runs thus:—*La Mère des trois Dupins.*

pape lui réserve in petto le chapeau de cardinal, à cause, vous savez, de ce fameux sermon sur les évêques, qu'il a si bien prêché!

'Je ne désespère pas même qu'on ne le mette un jour au rang des saints, afin qu'il puisse cumuler les joies du Paradis avec les joies de notre vallée de larmes.

'Outre ce bagage de croix, de dignités, de chaires, d'emplois, de diplômes, de manteaux, de rubans, d'épées, de plumes de Perry, de galons, d'habits, de billets de banque, de sacs d'argent et d'oripeaux de toute espèce dont M. Charles Dupin marche affublé, décoré, chargé, accablé, empaletoté, et qui pendillent et traînent de toutes parts, il a ses livres, ses manuels, ses cartes, ses plans, ses manuscrits, ses projets d'amener la mer à Paris, ni plus ni moins qu'on peut la voir au Havre, et ses études sur Démosthènes, qui n'était pas cependant le plus bavard des orateurs.

'Je ne voudrais pas cependant dire trop de mal de M. Dupin le savant, d'abord parce que j'aurais mauvaise grâce à me moquer des savants, ne l'étant moi-même en aucune façon, ensuite parce qu'après tout, les hommes du mérite de M. Dupin sont rares dans tous les pays. Je ne serais pas même fâché, entre nous, de cumuler, non pas autant d'emplois mais autant de science, et je changerais volontiers d'être Timon pour être Charles Dupin. Mais j'aimerais encore mieux être monsieur son frère.'—pp. 188-91.

M. Thiers is undoubtedly the cleverest man in Europe, if one half of what is confidently stated of him by M. Timon and the periodical press of Paris be true: for they assure us that he is wholly destitute of the qualities by which parliamentary or political consideration is ordinarily acquired—that he has neither birth, fortune, connexion, face, figure, character, principles, nor voice; and yet, somehow or other, there he stood of late for more than three months—as he certainly will stand again—the maker and unmaker of ministries, as fully to all intents and purposes as Warwick was ever the maker and unmaker of kings—the pivot on which turned the destinies of the French nation, and, through her, of most other nations in the world. Mark the tone in which he justifies his claim to the office of his choice:—

'It is not a puerile vanity; it is not a personal taste; I should not dare, in the face of my country, allege as reasons my vanity or my taste. It has been said—and I demand permission to explain myself with all possible freedom in this respect—it has been said that foreign diplomacy repudiated me. I do not believe it. I believe that they respect our government too much to express either preferences or repugnances: I believe our government respects itself too much to listen to them. But for the very reason that the objection had been raised, I regarded it as a patriotic duty on my part to give it a marked contradiction, by accepting no other portfolio than that of foreign affairs.'

M. Thiers was born in 1798. The early part of his biography would serve equally well for that of *Mignet*. They were the children

children of poor parents at Aix ; they were bred up together ; they studied law together ; they graduated as advocates about the same time ; they arrived at Paris to seek their fortune in company ; both have written histories of the Revolution, which, it is said, they showed to one another, page by page, as they proceeded ; and it was not until M. Thiers was elected a member of the Chamber that their careers became essentially distinct.* Amongst the advantages which they enjoyed in common was that of an introduction to Manuel, who, like them, was a native of Provence. Manuel introduced them to Lafitte, at whose house all the leading members and writers of the *left* were wont to meet. ' Here,' says an acute but caustic observer, ' the littleness of his figure—the ordinary expression of his features, half hidden under a vast pair of spectacles—the singular cadence of his accents, which made a sort of psalmody of his conversation—the continual fidgetty motion in which he indulged—a total want of the habits of society, remarkable even in the mixed cohort which encumbered the salons of M. Lafitte, all contributed to make of Thiers a being apart, who attracted attention from the first. Once granted, M. Thiers knew well how to keep it: nothing appeared new to him, neither finance, nor war, nor administration ; and he discussed all these matters in a manner sufficiently specious to seduce the bankers, the ancient functionaries of the empire, and the generals, all of whom he addressed without ceremony.'* Accordingly, soon after his arrival at Paris, M. Thiers had become the constant guest of M. Lafitte and Baron Louis, and was a regular contributor to the *Constitutionnel*, which he subsequently gave up, as his convictions deepened, for the *National*. It is beside our purpose to trace the steps by which M. Thiers gradually ascended towards the top of the ladder of political importance. His History of the Revolution opportunely gave breadth and stability to his fame ;† but at the same time it gave a more definite and fixed form to his principles than at sundry periods of his subsequent career he could have wished. He was chosen a deputy by his native town Aix soon after the Barricades,—an event to which he owes one of his many decorations, though his maligners assert that he remained invisible till the fighting part of the affair was at an end. He seems to have lost no time in mounting the tribune, but his effective *début* dates from a speech on the question whether the peerage should be hereditary.

The scene is graphically described in the French journal quoted above:—' M. Thiers' speech had been announced eight days beforehand. He arrived at an early hour, contrary to his wont, which

* *Revue des Deux Mondes*. 4me Series. Vol. iv.

† He has recently been offered 500,000 francs (20,000*l.*) for a continuation.

led to an expectation that his speech would be long. His toilette was *recherchée*, and he wore gloves. He ascended the steps of the tribune with an air of affected carelessness, as if about to do the easiest thing in the world, and remained silent for a time, as if to impose silence by his attitude; but this was only obtained by the interposition of his friends. At length he began, and it was seen at once that he was attempting a new description of oratory, for instead of the classical and formal style in which he had failed to attract attention, he was now all nature, ease, pertness, frankness, familiarity, colloquialism. By way of conciliating the favour of the Chamber towards the experiment, he took occasion at the outset to remark, that, in the case of the assembly he was addressing, the forum of the ancients had been changed into a room of honest men; and he endeavoured to keep up their attention during a four hours' display by the introduction of anecdotes." Thus, to illustrate the hereditary quality of greatness, he told a story of the younger Pitt's being placed on a table, when only six years old, to recite speeches; but, according to the malicious narrator, he himself, with his little figure and thin voice, so strongly recalled the image of the youthful statesman, that the effect fast bordered on the ludicrous. The speech, however, made a sensation, and M. Thiers was now frequently employed to make speeches for the ministry, though a lack of discretion, which will always prevent him from making a safe spokesman for any party, prevented them from ever recognising him as such; and when Mauguin alluded to him as the organ of the government, Casimir Perier contemptuously exclaimed: '*Ca un organe du gouvernement! M. Mauguin se moque de vous.*' The kind of speaking which thus made the fortune of M. Thiers is described by M. Timon:—

'It is not oratory, it is talk, but talk lively, brilliant, light, animated, mingled with historical traits, anecdotes, and refined reflections; and all this is said, broken off, cut short, tied, untied, sewn together again, with a dexterity of language absolutely incomparable. Thought springs up so quick in that head of his, so quick, that one would say it was born before it had been conceived. The vast lungs of a giant would not suffice to expectorate the words of that *spirituel* dwarf. Nature, ever watchful and considerate in her compensations, seems to have aimed at concentrating in him all the powers of virility in the frail organs of the larynx.'

Mr. Shiel's admirers are fond of comparing him to M. Thiers—but the resemblance is, we think, superficial. The summary of M. Thiers' alleged tergiversations is in M. Timon's best manner:—

'M. Thiers, on entering the world, was not cradled in the lap of a duchess. Born poor, he lacked fortune; born in obscurity, he lacked a name.

a name. Failing as an advocate, he became a man of letters, and threw himself headlong into the liberal party, more from necessity than conviction. He then set himself to admire Danton and the men of the Mountain, and he carried to exaltation the calculated fanaticism of his hyperboles. Eaten up by desires, like all men of lively imagination, he owed the commencement of his wealth to M. Lafitte, and his reputation to his own talent. However, were it not for the revolution of 1830, M. Thiers would be at the present day neither elector, nor eligible, nor deputy, nor minister, nor even academician; he would have grown old in the literary esteem of a coterie. Since then, M. Thiers has changed his party; he has become monarchist, aristocrat, maintainer of privileges, giver and executer of pitiless commands; he has attached his name to the *etat de siege* of Paris, to the *mitrallades* of Lyons, to the magnificent achievements of the Rue Transnonain, to the deportations of Mont St. Michel, to the laws regarding combinations, public criers, the courts of assize, and the newspapers, to all that has fettered liberty, to all that has degraded the press, to all that has corrupted the jury, to all that has decimated the patriots, to all that has dissolved the national guards, to all that has demoralised the nation, to all that has dragged the noble and *pure* (!!!) Revolution of July through the mud.

‘When, under a monarchy, a man without character and without virtue has received an education more literary than moral, and borne in the arms of fortune, he mounts the steps of power, his elevation turns his head. As he finds himself isolated on the heights he has reached, and knows not on what to lean, having neither individual consideration nor followers, belonging and wishing to belong no longer to the people, and unable, do what he will, to become one of the noble and the great, he lays himself down at the feet of his king, he kisses them, he licks them, and he is at a loss by what contortions of servility, by what caresses of supplication, by what pretences of devotedness, by what genuflexions, by what toe-kissings, to prove his humility and the down-to-the-ground character of his adoration. Persons of this species are like those predestined victims of Gehenna who have made a compact with the devil. They are marked with his nails, and if they attempt to turn their heads—break a link of their chain—move a step—their infernal master, to whom their body has been delivered, to whom their soul has been sold, calls to them, *Thou art mine*.’—vol. ii. p. 21.

In this shrewd passage there are two or three palpable misstatements. It is untrue to say that M. Thiers failed as an advocate, for he was never tried. It is unfair to say that a man of his abilities could have been nothing, or next to nothing, without the Revolution of July. And then the purity of that same Revolution! with a royal Duke conniving in a plot for the downfall of his own family—a plot organised by his own banker (Lafitte), to whom the King of the French is really indebted for his throne; and a band of patriots lying *perdus* until the evening of the third day, and then emerging from their cellars to scramble for the spoil! The last paragraph

paragraph involves a melancholy truth; but how is it applicable to Thiers, who is fighting on his own account against the crown, —on whose banner is or lately was inscribed: *Le roi règne et ne gouverne pas*. As to the measures by which, as minister, he enforced order—if on such grounds we are to impute knavery, M. Thiers will not stand quite alone. The truth is, that no man of understanding, who has had the misfortune to begin life as a liberal enthusiast, ever attained to power without finding that the doctrines of his youth were utterly incompatible—not merely with good government but—with the very existence of society.

We have before us two portraits of M. Guizot, which it is amusing to compare:

'M. Guizot,' says M. Timon, 'is short and slender, but he has an expressive face, a fine eye, and a remarkable degree of fire in his glance. There is something hard and pedantic in his look and manner, like all professors, particularly those of the doctrinaire sect, the sect of pride. His voice is full, sonorous, affirmative: it does not lend itself to the flexible emotions of the soul, but it is rarely muffled and dead. His exterior is studiously austere, and all about him is grave, even to his smile.'—vol. ii. p. 1.

The other forms the commencement of a sketch in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*. It also contains a fact regarding a distinguished English statesman which is new to us:—

'If you have any day a fancy to quit the Parliament and come and attend a sitting of our Chamber of Deputies, you might still see on the Ministerial bench (provided you make haste) a man with pale and furrowed cheeks, whose eyes, sunk in their orbit, resemble fires hidden in the depths of a cavern. One of his hands is habitually concealed under his waistcoat, and from his convulsive movements, you would call him a gambler secretly tearing his breast when the chances of the game are against him. Lord John Russell, so little, so pale, and so feeble, that it was necessary to stretch him on a sofa in the lobby after his speech on Parliamentary Reform, may give you an idea of this person; but he of whom I speak does not, like Lord John, suffer his half-pronounced periods to expire in empty air. His lagging and incisive phrase is an instrument which cuts and tears at once; his deep and almost funeral voice adds to the lugubrious expression of his physiognomy, and when he employs the form of sarcasm—which happens rarely, it is true—this forced mockery has always something terrifying.'

Both agree in one thing: that, when he ascends the tribune, he irresistibly suggests the image of a Calvinist minister mounting the pulpit, and that his speeches often resemble sermons both in composition and delivery. The sole foundation for this analogy seems to be a certain austerity of look and manner, and a habit of indulging in topics such as occasionally converted Burke and Mackintosh into bores—much more, by the way, to the discredit of the audience than of the orators.

M. Timon's

M. Timon's sweeping abuse of the Guizot school of thought and diction will at least divert our readers. The closing aphorism is good and true.

‘Depuis vingt ans, cette malheureuse, cette fatale école de l'éclectisme gouverne la jeunesse, dont elle abuse les généreux instincts, dont elle embrouille la vive et pure intelligence. Elle n'a engendré que des esprits faux, que des cœurs sans foi, sans flamme, et sans amour de la patrie, des cœurs que les grands sentiments n'ont jamais remués, que la soif des plaisirs égoïstes et brutaux dévore, que le spleen du doute tue, des cœurs éteints et mourants !

‘Oui, les pères de l'école moderne, avec leurs importations nébuleuses de Genève, de Berlin et d'Ecosse, ont gâté la philosophie, la jeunesse et la langue. Si cette belle langue française passe un jour à l'état de langue morte, nous avertissons la postérité que MM. Guizot, Royer-Collard et Cousin, ces trois chefs de l'instruction, ces trois professeurs de métaphysique quintessenciée, seront pour elle trois auteurs intraduisibles, puisque nous, leur contemporains, nous ne les comprenons pas.

‘M. Guizot, pour exprimer des idées qui ne sont pas des idées, s'est fait une langue que n'est pas une langue ; langue toute boursoufflée de propositions fausses, toute hésitée de termes inféconds qui ne peuvent pas aboutir ; langue creuse sans être profonde, affirmative sans certitude, raisonneuse sans logique, dogmatique sans conclusion et sans preuves, lente à se mouvoir, épaisse de salive, et qui mouille à peine des lèvres arides et desséchées.

‘Les laborieux commentateurs de M. Guizot se travaillent et s'épuisent à le deviner. Ils le pénètrent à-peu-près aussi bien que nous pénétrons l'apocalypse.

‘Le génie, c'est la lumière ; ce qui n'est pas clair n'est pas français.’
—pp. 6, 7.

M. Guizot's theories of government and legislation are known to all Europe : it is therefore unnecessary to point out in what particular he has made himself distasteful to the party to which M. Timon now professes to belong. Yet M. Timon frankly acknowledges that, when M. Guizot quits his philosophical speculations and condescends to business, he can go as straight as any body to the point, say nothing but what is required to be said, and say it well. His diction, also, is admitted to be purer and more correct than that of any other extempore speaker in either Chamber. His favourite mode of reasoning is that already mentioned as pursued by his friend and (in one sense) master, Royer-Collard. He selects some one idea or prominent point of view, and makes that the staple of his speech. ‘His oration is but the development of a theme. If the idea is true, all the discourse is true : if the idea is false, all the discourse is false.’ He never gives way to sudden emotions of any kind, and rarely indulges in personality.—

‘M. Guizot

'M. Guizot passes for cruel amongst the Opposition. His glistening eyes, his pale face, his contracted lips, give him the appearance of a proscriber. They attribute to him the famous phrase, *royez impitoyables*—horrid phrase, if it ever was pronounced. It is true, that he has been dangerously affected of late by an ardent and gloomy fanaticism : *but this was owing to the warm weather*, which always influences certain brains ; and there is a wide interval between the theory of terror he has preached, fine as it may be, and the practice.

'Why should I not say, so great is my desire to be impartial, that M. Guizot has strict and pure morals, and that he is worthy, by the high morality of his life and his sentiments, of the esteem of good men ? I have witnessed his paternal sorrow, and I have admired the severity of his stoicism. There is great firmness in that soul of his.'

There is a well-known anecdote of his early life which it would be difficult to reconcile with the notion of his being other than amiable and kind-hearted. Pauline de Meulan was a woman of considerable literary acquirements, who supported herself by writing articles for a paper called the '*Publiciste*;' she fell ill, and was unable to continue her contributions without serious injury to her health, but persevered under great suffering and privation, until one day a packet was brought to her containing a well-written article for her paper, and a note from the writer, in which he expressed a wish to continue *incognito*, but promised to write all the required articles for her till she got well. He kept his word, and it was not until she was completely recovered, that a pale, silent young man, whom she had been in the habit of seeing at M. Suard's, requested an interview, and avowed himself as her benefactor. It was M. Guizot ; and in due course of time Pauline de Meulan became his wife.

What was said of Flood, the rival of Grattan, and of Dundas, the friend of Pitt, may be said of *M. Mauguin*. He must be estimated, not by set speeches or insulated displays, but by his willingness to put out in all weathers, his gallantry in facing all difficulties, his persevering opposition to all lines of policy revolting to his conceptions of patriotism. When we glance over M. Mauguin's speeches, we find little that seems striking or complete enough to quote, for the simple reason that nothing has been elaborated with that intent ; but we are forcibly impressed with the nerve, manliness, readiness, clearness, and fluency of the speaker, and fully appreciate the strength such a man must add to the party which possesses him. When Sir Edward Sugden was last returned to parliament, the attorney-general is said to have confessed that he would willingly give a thousand pounds to keep him out. We have no doubt that any of the French governments for the last ten years would give ten times as much to get rid of Mauguin ; but it would be useless
for

for them to bid, since, independently of his known probity, he has lately succeeded to a fortune of some three or four millions of francs. M. Mauguin has a commanding person (somewhat resembling O'Connell's in massiveness), an open, expressive face, a fine voice with an attractive touch of melancholy in its tones, a gentlemanly address, agreeable manners, and great powers of conversation. He particularly excels in an ironical allusion or a retort. M. Timon, who does not like him though he says he does, quizzes him most unmercifully for his speeches on foreign affairs, in which, it must be owned, he shows somewhat too decided a *penchant* for war. For example, in 1831 :—

‘In this position it is not for you to say if you will avoid war. War with you is a question of epoch; will you have it now? will you have it in six months? will you have it when all foreign powers have secured all their advantages? I do not call on you to decide; but in this situation, if Belgium offered herself, could you refuse an increase of four millions of men and so many strong places, which for us are a powerful barrier against the foreigner? No, no. If, then, it is necessary—I say it with regret—if Belgium offered herself with this condition, I would say war, war! It might be destruction—death; I know it; but for France it would be glory and triumph too. . . .

‘What people in Europe would dare to attack you now?—Russia? Austria? England? Why does not England oppose the fresh invasion of Poland? If I am well informed, the answer given by her ministers is, the fear of giving a bad example to Ireland. Well, then, tell England we will be frank, loyal, sincere friends; we will be formidable enemies. The point is not, if there is war between us; to cover all the seas of the globe with privateers; a few steamboats would suffice to carry arms and a few regiments to Ireland. I speak of a state of war where everything is allowable; and England must not forget that, only a few years since, one of her ministers threatened all the kings of Europe. Tell her, then, that Ireland may see a French general once more. . . .

‘However—I know it well—this voice, which announces danger, wears you. When in the heights of the mountains a traveller is seized by the cold, his eyelids grow weary, he sinks. His companion calls to him to wake. “No, I must sleep.” “But this slumber is death.” “No, it is happiness, it is life.” The unhappy man falls and dies. Nations as well as individuals may indulge in treacherous slumbers, and foreign invasion and partition are their death.’

We quote this passage as a specimen of opinions still prevalent amongst French statesmen, and as illustrative of the degree of information they possess regarding the condition of these realms. In addition to his parliamentary eminence, M. Mauguin has attained high distinction at the bar. He was born in 1785—M. Guizot in 1787.

Perhaps M. Odilon-Barrot exercises at the present moment
more

more individual influence than any other speaker we have named; and it has been fairly earned by a long career of political prudence and probity. There is also an air of reflection about his speeches, with a vein of sound morality underlying most of them, particularly calculated to impress; and he speaks much less frequently than Mauguin, which makes many prefer him as a leader, it being a prevalent belief that a man who discusses all questions must inevitably commit himself on some. But though M. Odilon-Barrot is a discreet and dignified speaker, he is far from being a cold and formal one: on the contrary, he warms and grows animated as he proceeds, and occasionally gives vent to ebullitions of feeling well described by M. Timon as the eloquence of the heart. The more eager of his party are wont to bring against him the same charge which has frequently been brought of late against the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel: they say that he does not risk enough:—

‘Master of his passions and his words, he calms in him and around him the anger of the centres and the stormy ebullitions of the left. He prepares and covers the retreat, in places of difficulty, with the skill of a consummate master of strategy: he is the Fabius Cunctator of the Opposition. Unhappily, these temporising tactics, when too often repeated, cool down the parliamentary courage, which is not over-daring as it is. The part of the Opposition is not to hide itself behind the baggage, but to bear itself bravely in the front of battle. When the people do not see the soldiers of liberty mount the breach and fire, they grow weary, yawn, turn away, and repair to other spectacles.’—vol. ii. p. 139.

There may be some truth in this remark, but we believe Odilon-Barrot sees (what M. Timon does not care to see, or, seeing, is not anxious to shun) the abyss into which one incautious step might precipitate the monarchy; and the key to his conduct may be found in an exclamation that lately burst from him in debate, ‘Oh! perish twenty ministers, rather than the moral power of parliament, for that is our salvation.’ M. Odilon-Barrot is one of the most eminent members of the French bar; and he occasionally contributes to the leading law-reviews of the continent. His age must be something between forty-five and fifty: he is about the middle height and size, with a good voice, and a remarkably fine forehead.

We have reserved the chapter entitled ‘Comparison of Orators and Writers’ until we arrived at *M. Lamartine*, because he is more peculiarly the representative of literature than any other of the distinguished writers that have been named. M.M. Thiers and Guizot, for example, are even better known by their career as politicians than by their works: but *M. Lamartine’s* reputation,
let

let him speak as he will, will rest perforce upon his poetry; and the same dire necessity would have befallen Byron had his early hopes of parliamentary success been realised. Yet surely a man has no great right to be angry when he contends against, and is eventually baffled by—himself.

The chief question raised in this chapter is, why France, which boasts so many parliamentary orators, boasts so few political writers, though so many preliminary conditions (to be eligible and to be elected, for example) are required to become an orator, and any man may turn writer when he will. M. Timon solves this question by saying that it is more difficult to write well than to speak well; but before reasoning on the proposition, we should wish to understand exactly what it means, for it strikes us that he is unconsciously comparing two widely different degrees of superiority—that when he speaks of political writers, he has such writers as Paul Louis Courier, La Mennais, or Chateaubriand in his mind, whilst, under the term ‘parliamentary orators,’ he includes all who can command a hearing in the Chamber or get reported in the *Moniteur*. In no other sense is it true that good writers are rarer than good speakers. At the same time we quite agree with M. Timon, that a well-arranged, well-reasoned, well-written essay argues a higher description of talent than the common run of extempore speeches, in which the arrangement (such as it is) and probably the leading topics are suggested by the debate; and that it is far easier for a member of parliament to get a hearing than for a private individual to get read. But the more important question remains: how far literary men are likely to succeed in parliament? This, again, is best answered by analyzing it: for literature includes all sorts of composition, some analogous, some not analogous, some diametrically opposed to oratory. For example, when we read Addison, we feel at once, despite of his idiomatic felicities, that he must make an ineffective member; but when we read Bolingbroke, we fancy him declaiming in his place, and though we believe it was no less a person than Fox, who, when people were naming what lost productions they should most wish to restore, named one of Bolingbroke’s speeches, it always struck us that the ‘Patriot King’ and the ‘Letter to Windham’ had rendered all the wish superfluous. Show us any given writer’s writings, then, let us have a look at him and (if possible) hear him talk on any subject of interest, and we will endeavour to tell his parliamentary fortune; but to lay down general rules on such a subject with the view of deciding individual cases by them, would be to act like the *Laputans* when they measured gentlemen for clothes.

Lord Brougham, in his inaugural discourse at Glasgow, recommends

the diligent practice of composition; and it may be urged that a man who has been accustomed to express himself on paper, must have a decided advantage over one who has never expressed himself at all: to which the answer would be, that, unless the student practised himself exclusively in writing speeches, he would probably contract a style ill-fitted for debate, and the objector might cite the well-known remark of Fox—‘Did it read well? Then, depend upon it, it was not a good speech.’ In the case of young writers, therefore, we should say that literary habits would be rather an advantage, but in the case of writers of long-established reputation, the answer (as already intimated) must principally depend upon the style.

M. Lamartine, according to M. Timon, is an apt illustration of our theory, his speeches being precisely such as his poems would lead one to anticipate. But M. Timon has not formed a very high estimate of the poems, and has most assuredly under-estimated Lamartine’s merits as an orator. It is frankly admitted that he has a fine figure, regular features, a firm and noble bearing, goodness of heart, elevation of sentiment, and unimpeachable integrity: that he has great command of language, and replies with brilliant facility; but it is contended that there is nothing passionate or inspired in his look, his gesture, or his voice—that he shines and does not warm—that he is religious, and has no faith—and that the same want of logical coherence which mars the effect of his verse, is still more fatal to his parliamentary displays. The laudatory part of this description we are in a condition to confirm by our own testimony; and as to the rest, the truth is, Lamartine generally shows less fire than might be expected from a poet—perhaps for the very reason that it is expected—and treats his subject rather languidly and diffusely, and with too much attention to style and manner, till he warms—but always speaks like one speaking from conviction; and in moments of high excitement is one of the most animated and impassioned speakers in the Chamber. His speech in defence of the press, when some stricter laws were proposed (August 22, 1835), exemplifies both the merits and demerits of his style. We wish we could quote more than the conclusion:—

‘Believe me once again, your laws run counter to your end. If we were your enemies, as you say we are, we should hasten to vote them out of hate to you, and as a treacherous and deadly boon. The event which agitates us all is stronger than your laws. What law more efficacious or more speaking than that king and his sons under a storm of bullets? that illustrious marshal covering them with his blood? those thirty-two dead bodies strewing the pavement? those fourteen biers traversing your terror-stricken capital? These are spectacles which repel from crime by horror, as a licentious press repels from anarchy by disgust.

disgust. These are laws as God has made them; all visible, all ~~im-~~ ^{im-} ~~maginating~~ ^{maginating}—all powerful with emotion—with instruction—addressed to the imagination and the instinct of the mass. Leave them to act by themselves, those grand and terrible lessons: they are more impressive than, our vain discussions, more durable than your laws of a day.

Innumerable passages of little inferior merit might be selected, and we should be inclined to quote the commencement and conclusion of his speech on the conversion of the funds (Feb. 5, 1836) as amongst the very best examples of the exordium or the peroration that we know.

Considering the attention we have paid to Literature, Science might have some reason to complain were we to pass her by without a word,—particularly when she boasts such a representative as *M. Arago*, who stands in the very first rank of European celebrities. To attempt any account, however slight, of the pursuits and discoveries by which his reputation has been attained, would be beside the purpose of this article; and *M. Timon* has compressed all that can well be said of his oratorical character in a paragraph:

‘When *M. Arago* ascends the tribune, the deputies, curious and attentive, lean on their elbows and keep still. The spectators press forward to look at him. His stature is tall, his hair is clustered and flowing, and his fine southern head commands the assembly. In the muscular contraction of his temples there is a power of volition and meditation which reveals a superior spirit. Unlike those orators who speak on every subject and know nothing of what they are talking about three times out of four, *M. Arago* speaks only on questions that he has studied, questions which unite the interest of circumstances to the attraction of science. His discourses have thus both generality and actuality, and address themselves at the same time to the intelligence and the passions of his audience. For this reason he is not slow in subduing them. No sooner has he entered upon the matter in hand than he concentrates all looks upon himself. You see him holding, as it were, science between his hands. He clears it of its asperities and technicalities, and renders it so precise and so perceptible, that the most ignorant are astonished to see and comprehend it. His animated and expressive pantomime adds to the effect of the oratorical illusion. There is something luminous in his demonstrations, and streams of light seem to issue from his eyes, his fingers, and his mouth. He intersects his speeches with biting allusions, which defy reply, or piquant anecdotes which harmonise with his subject and adorn without surcharging it. When he confines himself to the narration of facts, his eloquence has merely the natural graces of simplicity: but when, face to face with Science, he contemplates her with earnestness to discover her secrets and reproduce their wonders—then his admiration begins to employ a magnificent language, his voice swells, his style grows richer and richer, and his eloquence is as grand as his subject.’—vol. ii. p. 184.

After this, the highest service we can do M. Arago is to leave him where he stands. Here, however, it might fairly be asked why we do not enumerate the literary and scientific members of the British parliament, by way of laying the foundation of a parallel: but far from offering or provoking any challenge of the sort, it is one we should most anxiously decline, and our only hope is that M. Timon will not insist on drawing any sweeping conclusions of an invidious nature from our avowed inferiority in this respect. He is quite welcome, if it so pleases him, to censure our government for not promoting men of intellectual eminence, or our constituent bodies for not electing them. Up to this point we shall probably go along with him; but before judging of English science and literature by their parliamentary representatives, let him, in common fairness, make due allowance for the facts—let him, in common charity, bear constantly in mind—that neither Wordsworth, nor Herschel, nor Hallam wear coronets; that no mitre has fallen either on Sydney Smith or Sedgwick, Milman or Whewell, Keble or Buckland; that Babbage is the rejected, not the elected, of Finsbury; that a round dozen of fashionable novelists or melo-dramatists would be a poor set-off for Lamartine, Guizot, or Chateaubriand; that Messrs. Longman have not quite made up their minds to offer Lord John Russell twenty thousand pounds for a continuation of his History, with the view of putting him on a par with M. Thiers; and that Leeds (instead of having to contend for Sir William Molesworth with six rivals, as Marne contended for Royer-Collard) is probably the sole place in the empire which would have afforded a temporary refuge to the editor of Hobbes—the only metaphysician in the House,—unless, indeed, we adopt the definition of Voltaire, which would make as good a one of Mr. Joseph Hume: ‘*Quand celui qui ecoute n’entend rien, et celui qui parle n’entend plus, c’est metaphysique.*’

ART. VIII.—1. Review of the Session. Speech of the Right Hon.

Lord Lyndhurst, delivered in the House of Lords on Friday, August 23rd, 1839. pp. 23. London.

2. *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates for the Session 1839.*

3. *Parliamentary Papers for the Session 1839.*

4. *Despatches of the Right Hon. Lord Glenelg. 8vo. pp. 193. Ridgway, London.*

THE late session of the imperial parliament ended so unsatisfactorily—so much had been expected from it, and so little obtained—so much had been promised, and so little performed—so much had required protection, and yet in every department

partment so much had been lost, that throughout the country there has naturally prevailed a murmuring demand,—firstly, for an explanation of the mismanagement by which the nation is still suffering; and, secondly, for some plain wholesome remedy, by which the disorder may be cured.

Impressed with the delicacy, as well as with the difficulty which attend the consideration of these two problems, we would gladly abstain from attempting their solution: yet when we reflect upon the vital importance of the questions, we feel it to be our duty to take our share before the country in that inquiry in which the minds of our readers, we are perfectly confident, have been painfully engaged. As Sterne, however, in order to elucidate the misery of slavery, quietly introduced his readers into the cell of ‘a single captive,’ so it will be necessary for us, instead of examining our late policy in every department of the state, to select some one for dissection.

The home department naturally first suggested itself; but we soon found it to be entangled with so many private jealousies, and with so much public animosity, that we shrunk from the attempt. Our foreign policy next presented itself; but finding that it also had been mixed up with much rancour, and that it extended over too large a portion of the globe to be conveniently comprehended within our limits, we fixed our choice upon our colonial legislation, which, although of vital importance to the empire, has lately given rise to no angry feelings, no unworthy desires, no jealousies, no animosities, public or private.

We shall divide our subject into the five following inquiries:—

I. Let us calmly consider whether her Majesty’s government or the Imperial Parliament have duly resented the insults publicly offered to themselves, as well as the crown, by Lord Durham?

In investigating this important question we summon his Lordship before our readers only as a witness in a case, the facts of which appear from his own documents to be, shortly, as follows:

The law-officers of the crown in England having reported that a certain ordinance, issued at Quebec by Lord Durham, was illegal—an opinion which has been confirmed by the highest legal authorities in the realm—her Majesty, the House of Lords, and the House of Commons, deemed it necessary, by an act of parliament, to screen or shelter the Lord High Commissioner from the consequences of his illegal proceeding. Not only, however, did their act of indemnity carefully abstain from passing the slightest censure upon his Lordship, but her Majesty’s ministers, in a despatch dated 15th August, 1838, generously, and, we think, very properly, transmitted the said act to his Lordship, with the following febrifuge:—

I cannot conclude this despatch without expressing the deep regret which her Majesty's government have felt at the embarrassment to which you will have been subjected by the recent proceedings in parliament, regarding the difficult and delicate question of the disposal of the persons charged with treason in Lower Canada. On a deliberate review of the whole case, her Majesty's government are enabled distinctly to repeat their approbation of the spirit in which those measures were conceived, and to state their conviction that those measures have been dictated by a judicious and enlightened humanity, and were calculated, under your authority, to satisfy the ends of justice, although in some respects they involve a departure from its ordinary forms. The government are also persuaded that your Lordship will be equally anxious with themselves to avoid, as far as possible, giving even a plausible ground of cavil or objection to hostile criticism.

It only remains for me to assure you of the undiminished confidence which her Majesty's government repose in you; and of their earnest desire to afford you the utmost support in the discharge of the arduous duties with which you are entrusted. I have, &c.

GLENELG.

On the receipt of the foregoing communication, it must, of course, have been evident to Lord Durham that if the ordinance, which, on such high authority, had been declared to be illegal was legal, the act of indemnity became null and void, its effect inoperative, its protection worthless, and its provisions discreditable to the parliament from which it had proceeded; and as proverbially there is no finer sight than that of a just man struggling with adversity, so there never was offered to any individual, conspicuously holding an arduous and important station, a nobler opportunity of dutifully submitting to an authority which he was bound to obey those arguments by which truth and justice in every region of the globe invincibly support a man labouring in an honest cause. Had the Lord High Commissioner adopted this course—however omnipotently, and however obstinately, parliament might have adhered to its decision—the voice of the country would loudly have reversed it by a verdict of acquittal.

But Lord Durham was pleased to adopt an opposite course. Instead of appealing to the justice of his Sovereign, to the wisdom and liberality of parliament, or to the consideration of her Majesty's government, his Lordship determined, without authority, and in defiance of authority, to abandon his post, although, in his own opinion, and in the opinion of parliament, the safety and security of the Canadas rested upon his protection.

At a moment when the lower province was in wicked rebellion against its Sovereign, and when it required the presence of a powerful army to suppress the conspiracy which existed not only in the Canadas, but in the United States, to subvert the authority
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of the British crown, his Lordship was pleased, not intemperately and abruptly to throw down his powers, but, with wilful mischief and with malice prepense, deliberately to exercise them, by issuing, under the Queen's great seal, a proclamation, in which, as her Majesty's accredited representative in the North American colonies, he directly appealed, not *unto* Cæsar, but *against* Cæsar — TO THE PEOPLE!

In this rebellious document, as well as in others of a similar tendency, which we shall quote, Lord Durham strongly contrasts a solemn act of the Queen and of both houses of the imperial parliament, which he reviles, with his own conduct, upon which he passes the most fulsome encomiums.



'A PROCLAMATION.

'In conformity with one of its provisions, I have this day proclaimed the act 1 and 2 Victoria, chap. 112.

'I have also to notify the disallowance by her Majesty of the ordinance 2nd Victoria, chap. 1, entitled "An Ordinance to provide for the security of the Province of Lower Canada."

'I cannot perform these official duties without at the same time informing *you, the people of British America*, of the course which the measures of the imperial government and legislature make it incumbent on me to pursue.'

After detailing in glowing terms the benefits he had intended to perfect, his Lordship proceeds to address the inhabitants of the British American colonies as follows:—

'In these just expectations I have been painfully disappointed. From the very commencement of my task, the minutest details of my administration have been exposed to incessant criticism, in a spirit which has evinced an entire ignorance of the state of this country, and of the only mode in which the supremacy of the British crown can here be upheld and exercised. I also did believe,' adds his Lordship, 'that, even if I had not the precedents of these acts of parliament, a government *and a legislature* anxious for the peace of this unhappy country and for the integrity of the British empire, would not *sacrifice to a petty technicality* the vast benefits which my entire policy promised.'

Instead of obeying the explicit recommendations of her Majesty's government, by concurring with the special council in an ordinance to prevent the persons whom he had illegally banished to Bermuda from returning to the province without the royal permission, Lord Durham thus deliberately, under the great seal, officially sanctions their return;—

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'Her Majesty having been advised to refuse her assent to the exceptions, the amnesty exists without qualification. *No impediment therefore exists* to the return of the persons who had made the most distinct admission of guilt, or who had been excluded by me from the province on account of the danger to which its tranquillity would be exposed by their presence.

'If the peace of Lower Canada is to be again menaced, it is necessary that its government should be able to reckon on a more cordial and vigorous support at home than has been accorded to me.'

Not satisfied with this insolent appeal to the people of the British North American colonies in general against the solemn act of the British legislature, and against the deliberate instructions of her Majesty's government, Lord Durham, as the representative of his Sovereign, addressed to the deputies of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward's Island, a written communication, of which the following is an extract:—

'I assumed the government of the North American provinces, with the pre-determination to provide for the future welfare and prosperity of them all. In this I trust useful course, I have been suddenly arrested by the *interference* of the British Legislature, in which the responsible advisers of the Crown have deemed it their duty to acquiesce.'

As the representative of his Sovereign, his Lordship next addressed to the inhabitants of the capital of Lower Canada a written communication, of which the following is an extract:—

'I do not return to England, from any feelings of *disgust* at the treatment I have personally experienced in the House of Lords. If I could have been influenced by any such motives, I must have re-embarked in the very ship which brought me out; for that system of *parliamentary persecution*, to which I allude, commenced from the moment I left the shores of England.

'I return for these reasons, and these alone—the proceedings in the House of Lords, acquiesced in by the Ministry, have deprived the Government in this province of all moral power and consideration. They have reduced it to a state of executive nullity, and rendered it dependent on one branch of the Imperial Legislature for the immediate sanction of each separate measure. In truth and in effect, the Government here is now administered by *two or three peers, from their places in parliament*.'

In re-publishing the above sentiments, the Toronto 'Patriot' thus informs its readers of the effect they had produced at Quebec:—

'Various placards have been posted in different parts of the town, expressive of the feelings of *disgust* entertained by the loyal portion of the inhabitants at the conduct of the Lords who have assailed Lord Durham, and interfered in his administration of the government of this country.'

country. As a specimen of the spirit in which they are conceived, we select the following :—

“*The Earl of Durham proceeds to England to defend his conduct from unjust and cowardly aggression. The British and Irish population, confident in the justice of their cause, have all to hope, from his talents, his integrity, and his firmness, when he shall have met HIS FOES within the walls of parliament.*”

As her Majesty's representative,* Lord Durham next addressed to the inhabitants of the capital of Upper Canada a written communication, of which the following are extracts :—

“Mr. Mayor and Gentlemen,—For the reasons which have induced me to return to England, I must refer you to my proclamation of this day's date, in which they are fully set forth, and the state and condition of the Canadas amply adverted to.

“It is at the same time a great consolation to me to reflect, that, notwithstanding my having been so abruptly arrested by the proceedings in the House of Peers, in the arduous task of restoring peace, and providing for your future prosperity, I have yet done much to justify your confidence and gain your approbation. What was the state of the Canadas when I assumed the government? Rebellion had been but recently quelled—martial law had been proclaimed, and the Habeas Corpus suspended. The gaols were filled with prisoners, and distrust and apprehension pervaded the minds of all classes—along the whole line of frontier, from Lake Champlain to Lake St. Clair, the most active hostility against the British Government prevailed, in which Canadian refugees and American borderers equally participated.

“*In three months what was the change? Martial law was superseded, the Habeas Corpus restored, not a political criminal remained in confinement in the Lower Province, nor was there any symptom of the existence of any seditious or treasonable movements until the arrival of the intelligence of the interference of the House of Lords.*”

As the Queen's representative, Lord Durham addressed to her Majesty's Secretary of State a despatch, dated 25th September, 1838, of which the following are extracts :—

“The proceedings in the House of Lords, from the moment of my leaving the shores of England, showed but too distinctly that the support so essential to my success was not extended to me. I allude in particular to the speech of the Duke of Wellington on the 4th July, and to the expressive silence of the Prime Minister on that occasion. In forty-eight hours after the speech attributed to the Duke of Wellington had been published here, the tone of that part of the press which represents the disaffected exhibited a remarkable change; giving evidence, no longer of submission, however unwilling, to extraordinary powers unhesitatingly exercised, but of discontent, irritation, and seditious hopes. . . . You will easily understand, therefore, that no sufficient allowance was made here for the nature of those party motives which had dictated the proceedings of the opposition and the government in respect to my mission.”

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This series of documents proves that Lord Durham did not apocryphically fall from his post in a fit of passion; for it is undeniable that his Lordship could not have penned the elaborate documents we have quoted, without having had ample time to reflect upon their consequences as to his own character, as well as the colonies, to which they were to be addressed.

Lord Durham's proclamation and mischievous appeals not only to 'the People,' but to the officers of the Queen's Guards, having been promulgated, the seeds of sedition having been sown and harrowed in, his Lordship became of opinion that the hour for the abandonment of his post had at last arrived, and accordingly, having by an act of political arson set fire with his own hands to his own authority, he took unauthorised possession of one of her Majesty's ships of war, and then retiring from the flames of a rebellion which naturally enough burst out only four days after his departure, as a private gentleman *functus officio*, he sailed in the *Inconstant* from Quebec, and after a blustering passage arrived off Plymouth, accompanied by a storm singularly emblematic of the political state of the provinces he had abandoned, and of the rough reception in the House of Lords which he was fairly entitled to expect.

Although in sight of an English harbour, the elements for several days still claimed him as their own. The thunder rolled around him; the lightning flashed upon his brow; the winds, as if proud of their victim, refused to surrender him; and certainly if the Demon of Discord himself had majestically visited our shores, he could not have come attended by more terrific honours: but the gale at last subsided, the tempest at last relented, and accordingly, after having been grievously shaken both in body and soul, his Lordship safely landed on British soil.

As Lord Durham's authority over the North American colonies, having devolved upon Sir John Colborne, could not occupy two places at the same time, his Lordship in England was no longer answerable as the representative of his Sovereign for any opinions he might publicly promulgate, and being therefore undeniably as much at liberty as any other nobleman or gentleman in the country to utter whatever political sentiments he chose, it is irrelevant to our present inquiry to consider what he may have thought proper to say after, having railed the seal from his commission, he had returned to and mingled with the community in 'plain clothes:' still, however, a few short extracts from his *written* replies to addresses he received may be adduced as being singularly characteristic, not of the Lord High Commissioner, but of the 'unquenchable vanity of *the man*.'

To an address from the borough of Plymouth his Lordship read a reply, of which the following is an extract:—

‘Gentlemen,—If I have received, *as I have*, more numerous testimonies of regard from all classes in the North American provinces than ever before were presented to any of their rulers, it has been owing to my determination to recognise no party distinctions, to act with justice and impartiality to all, and to lay the foundation of those wise and safe ameliorations in the institutions of the colonies which were so imperatively required.

‘I have the happiness to know that in *effacing the remains* of a disastrous rebellion, and administering justice, I have not found it necessary to shed one drop of blood, or confiscate the property of a single individual.

‘I had *conciliated the esteem* of a great and powerful nation, in which were to be found all the elements of danger or security to our North American possessions—I had seen commerce and enterprise reviving, public confidence restored, &c. &c.

‘In this career of, I humbly but fearlessly venture to assert, *complete success*, I have been suddenly arrested.’

To the people of Devonport his Lordship read a communication, of which the following is an extract:—

‘Mr. Mayor and Gentlemen,—You will *never* have reason to repent the confidence you have placed in me, or the declaration which you have this day made, of your approbation of my government in British North America. Upon that subject I shall, when parliament meets, be prepared to make a representation of *facts wholly unknown here*, and disclosures of which the parliament and people of this country have no conception; *I shall then fearlessly demand from the assembled legislature* that justice which neither they nor the people of England will ever deny to a public servant who has faithfully and honestly discharged the duties assigned to him.’

But before Lord Durham, the trumpet-major of his own procession, could pompously reach Exeter, intelligence had arrived from Quebec by a fast-sailing vessel (propelled by the very gale which had prevented his landing at Plymouth), detailing a general outbreak in Lower Canada, and an invasion by the Americans, which made it necessary for his Lordship immediately to change his tone—not at all as regarded self-adulation, but—with respect to the assertions he had made at Plymouth, that ‘he had effaced the remains’ of a disastrous rebellion—that he had conciliated the esteem of a great and powerful nation—that he had seen commerce and enterprise reviving, and public confidence restored.’ Accordingly, in his written reply to the corporation of Exeter (of which the following are extracts), it will appear that—while he still most affectionately lauded himself, while he still reiterated the circumstances ‘deeply to be deplored’ which had caused his return—yet his Lordship felt it prudent no longer to conceal
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the awkward truth, that it was from the field of battle, and not from the bosom of peace, that he had so suddenly decamped!

'I am proud,' says his Lordship, 'to say that my administration of affairs in British America, which you are pleased to praise, *has won me the regard and confidence* of all the loyal, well-affected, and enlightened classes in that vast country.

'You know, and have adverted to, the circumstances which compelled me to terminate this course of action. They are, indeed, deeply to be deplored. And the late intelligence from Canada shows how injuriously the best interests of the empire are affected by proceedings founded on party feeling and political animosity.

'That the lamentable events in Canada would inevitably take place *was foreseen by me*; and every preparation was made, consistently with the means at my disposal, for *meeting* them vigorously and efficiently.'

In Honiton, Totness, Ashburton, and elsewhere, his Lordship managed to address as many of a certain class of her Majesty's subjects as could be induced to assemble; but his march of glory came to an end, and his Lordship at last found himself once again in Cleveland Row—the monarch of all he surveyed.'

On his arrival at this residence, his Lordship haughtily forbore personal communication with her Majesty's ministers—his noble consort resigned her appointment in the Queen's household—and these notes of war having been sounded, his Lordship appeared to expect that parliament would immediately be convened to receive him. Many concurred in this opinion: indeed, such was the excitement in the mother country, as well as in the colonies, that the Queen's proclamation, appointing the meeting of parliament at the usual period, was treated by the newspapers as an affected calmness on the part of the Cabinet, strangely contrasted with the fearful tempest which raged within it.

Now, if at this awful moment any man had dared to prophesy that on the meeting of parliament a single day would be permitted to elapse without her Majesty's ministers arraigning Lord Durham for the serious consequences of the insults which from the Castle of Quebec he had, under her Majesty's Great Seal, offered to the Queen's authority, to the authority of parliament, and to themselves, would even their enemies have credited so extraordinary a prediction? Would any one but a maniac have ventured to foretell that parliament, taking its regular holidays at Easter and Whitsuntide, would remain in session *seven months*, without a single member demanding of Lord Durham by what authority he had re-appeared among them, by what authority he had abandoned his post in the hour of danger, and in virtue of what clause of his commission he had presumed to appeal to 'the people' of the Canadas against a solemn act of the imperial parliament?

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When Lord Durham, on the very first day of the session, with unexampled recklessness obtruding himself upon notice, interrupted the grave consideration of the Queen's address by claiming the previous attention of the House to his own personal case; when on following nights his Lordship again and again reiterated the same demand for precedence, with what breathless attention would the House of Peers have listened; with what feelings would Lord Durham have shrunk for ever into retirement, had the veteran leader of the House—that soldier of our empire who has ever yet faced with triumph the enemies of his Sovereign—risen from his seat but calmly to exclaim—

‘Quousque tandem abutere, Catilina, patientia nostra?’

But neither by her Majesty's ministers, nor by their opponents, nor by either house of the imperial parliament, was Lord Durham thus arraigned or conjured: on the contrary, in the face of all parties, and in flagrant violation of public pride and public principle, a deed was imagined and perpetrated by her Majesty's ministers, which we venture to assert stands unparalleled in the history of the world.

Of all the weaknesses which characterise human nature, there is no one more common than that of lingering over by-gone subjects which once strongly attracted the attention. When a man has suddenly been divested of authority, his mind almost invariably flies back to the unwholesome food from which it has been weaned; and, accordingly, it is proverbial, that, of all the button-hanging bores who pester society, an ex-governor of a colony is the most annoying: for until he has cleansed his mind by the publication of some heavy book, or of a series of pamphlets which, like a string of boils, eventually restore him to health, it is in the nature of the animal unceasingly to rave about his own abolished consequence—about what he might, could, should, or would have done had he continued in power, and about some political nostrum which is only to be obtained from the laboratory of his own pocket.

This being the case (and that it is the case, our readers' experience as well as the records of the Colonial Office will abundantly testify), it was reasonably to be expected, that, inasmuch as Lord Durham's most unusual powers had suddenly expired, a literary phoenix of extraordinary magnitude would ere long be seen to arise out of the pale ashes of his extinguished authority.

Accordingly, his Lordship employed the interval between his arrival in England and the meeting of parliament, in collecting from the strangers who had accompanied him, as also from individuals residing in the Canadas, motley opinions on various subjects. On the meeting of parliament a portion only of these data had arrived—

arrived—several were supposed to be on their passage—several actually had not left Quebec; however, his Lordship, determining that reasons could not be demanded from him before they had arrived, framed his report without its foundation, and having transmitted this *omnium-gatherum* to the colonial department, of which he well knew it might justly be said,—

‘Ante fores atræ fecunda papavera florent,’

and printed copies of it having been simultaneously transmitted to Lower Canada, he next day stood up in the House of Lords, and before even the amiable Secretary of State had read the report, he expressed his impatience that it should be immediately considered by parliament.

Now, without taking into consideration Lord Durham's repeated acts of insubordination, we beg leave to observe that very grave, and, we must add, insuperable *primâ facie* objections existed against even her Majesty's government receiving, as an official report from the ex-Lord High Commissioner of the Canadas (the government of which had, by his own act and deed, devolved upon Sir John Colborne), a pamphlet edited, rather than written, by Lord Durham—after he had been succeeded in his office, and of which the appendix actually had not arrived from Quebec.

If Lord Durham had been relieved from his station with the most honourable encomiums that ever were heaped by a British government upon a retiring viceroy, yet it would have established a bad precedent to have continued to treat him as the governor of the colony after his authority had been extinguished: for, setting all personalities aside, every man who has wielded even petty authority must surely know, that unless a public servant be heavily laden with the responsibility of his station, he can never safely declare what measures he would really recommend; for, relieved from this ballast, the mind is too apt to sport in shallow water, and is consequently liable to be driven on rocks, or be suddenly overset by the first unexpected squall.

If an ex-governor can, as from his grave, continue officially to report after his authority is defunct, there seems to be no reason why parliament should not consider as secretary of the colonies, not the individual virtually responsible for the department, but him out of all preceding secretaries—pensioned or unpensioned—who may be deemed to be gifted with the highest talent. But as regards my Lord Durham and his pamphlet, the case was altogether different: for, instead of having been regularly relieved from a post of high confidence, his Lordship had culpably abandoned it—instead of having received encomiums from his Sovereign and from parliament, his Lordship had unconstitutionally appealed to ‘the people’
against

against the solemn act of both. His very appearance in his place in the House of Lords was an act of insubordination, as well as a contempt of Sovereign authority; and, therefore, whatever might be the intrinsic value of his unread pamphlet, even to receive it as an official document, after he had suicidally annulled his own commissison, was, on the part of the Queen's government, to ratify desertion and sanction mutiny.* But however degraded her Majesty's present ministers may stand in the estimation of honest men, could any one have believed that besides receiving among themselves this pamphlet as a 'Report,' they would have been so wanting in respect to the crown, as to advise a youthful, inexperienced, and confiding Queen not only to accept it—not only to pass unnoticed Lord Durham's proclamation against her in Canada—but, as if in approbation of his Lordship's unauthorised return to England, herself to transmit his opinions to both houses of parliament, as official instruction to the very legislature whose character and motives he had branded with insolent reproach—whose solemn act he had publicly reviled?

What were our colonies to think of such a recommendation from the British crown? What were the courts of Europe to think of it? What was the civilized world to think of it? Could five months' experience possibly enable Lord Durham to offer to parliament anything that could compensate for this irreparable violation of just pride and principle? Would any mercantile body of Directors, who had been openly denounced to their shareholders by their agent, before as well as after he had abandoned their service, deign to transmit to them his advice? Would any private gentleman in England, who upon his own estate had been publicly insulted by his factor, transmit to the consideration of his tenants any opinion, however valuable, written and addressed to him by the said agent *after he had contemptuously thrown up his trust*?

As there is no limit to the mercy of the British Sovereign, so Lord Durham's offences, whatever they might have been, might, in her Majesty's wisdom, have been graciously overlooked—forgiveness would perhaps have been the most appropriate punishment that could have been inflicted; but for the Queen to force his Lordship upon both houses of parliament as their legal and political adviser ought surely, as the act of ministers, to have been made (especially by the peers) the subject of immediate, respectful, but unflinching remonstrance.

Will posterity believe that in neither house of parliament did there rise up a single member boldly to say to the ministers of the crown—Why do you insult us by requiring of us to participate in our own dishonour? What reason have you to urge for forcing upon our consideration this posthumous Report, until at least we shall

... *from its author some arguments for the im-*
possibility he has publicly offered to the Sovereign, to us, and to the
public service? If Pope's maxim, 'How oft the reasoner but from
what we know,' be correct, upon what is Lord Durham's claim
upon our attention based? Is it upon the legal ignorance he has
shown in framing ordinances which have been annulled, and which
made it necessary for parliament to grant to him an act of in-
demnity? Is it upon the unconciliatory disposition he has evinced
in removing twenty special councillors appointed by his prede-
cessor as possessing the highest character, greatest experience,
and largest stake in the country, and replacing them by five of
his own household or personal staff, of whom, to say the least, it
was perfectly impossible that the people of the provinces could
get the slightest assurance that they either knew or cared for
their wants or interests? Is it upon the utter disregard he has
shown for the welfare of the British North American colonies by
deserting them at a moment pregnant, as he himself has avowed,
with difficulties and dangers? Is it upon the want of deference
he has shown to the advice and injunctions of the sovereign and
of the ministers from whom he received his authority? What
public principle has Lord Durham observed in his ephemeral
government of the Canadas, but an utter disregard of the control
of his superiors, an entire want of consideration of any authority
but his own? Ought we, with the eyes of the world upon us,
even to listen to the advice of a public servant to whom her Ma-
jesty's ministers have declared in a despatch (which they them-
selves have published), that the terms of his Lordship's proclama-
tion to the inhabitants of our colonies have 'appeared to her
Majesty's ministers calculated to impugn the reverence due to the
royal authority—to derogate from the character of the imperial
legislature—to excite among the disaffected hopes of impunity, and
to enhance the difficulties with which his Lordship's successor
would have to contend?'

It is with the deepest regret we record that no such questions
 were asked—no such objections raised. Lord Melbourne has
 since unblushingly declared, (at a moment when the houses of
 respectable inhabitants of Birmingham had been gatted and their
 chattels fired by the Chartists,) *'that in his opinion a man's being*
a member of a political union ought not to operate as a disqualifi-
cation for subsequent employment as a magistrate in the public
service.' On precisely the same principle her Majesty's ministers
 advised their sovereign to transmit Lord Durham's London Report
 to both houses of parliament.

'Fas est ab hoste doceri.'

II. Let us consider whether her Majesty's government and the
 Imperial

Imperial Parliament have duly considered the ~~affairs of the colonies~~ mentioned in Lord Durham's Report?

When an individual or a legislature departs from the direct road of honour and principle, the angle of aberration is often so acute, that a considerable time elapses before the error is detected. One petty offence insensibly leads to the commission of another, and thus it every year happens, that it is not until the criminal has received the awful sentence of death, that, of his own accord, he attributes his miserable fate to an early desecration of the sabbath, to an unfortunate introduction to a vicious companion, or to some evil propensity the consequences of which he had neglected to anticipate. It might, therefore, have happened that the objectionable presentation by her Majesty's ministers to parliament of the pamphlet of a nobleman who had insulted the authority of the legislature and of the crown might for a considerable time have been productive of no serious inconvenience, and that those who had weakly argued '*What harm will it do?*' might with equal fallacy for a considerable time, have demanded, with apparent triumph, '*What harm has it done?*' Such, however, has not been the case, for the fatal effects of this misconduct have already become apparent—the punishment has already followed the offence—the cause and effect are visibly in juxtaposition; indeed, the thunder of heaven does not more quickly follow the momentary flash in the firmament, than the loud murmuring of despair is now throughout our North American colonies following that fatal, ill-advised message of her Majesty, which transmitted to parliament Lord Durham's posthumous Report.

What in theory might have been expected from the counsel of a proud radical nobleman who had contumaciously fled from difficulties he had neither time nor temper to investigate, is an idle speculation, which it is not now necessary to pursue, because the actual result is before us to speak for itself.

We will not offer to our readers anything so little worthy of their attention as our opinions of this extraordinary document, of which we will merely say, that it accurately fulfils what might have been expected from its parentage; but will rather consider what have been the official opinions of the most competent authorities on the subject.

As regards Lord Durham's observations on *Lower Canada*, it seems to be generally admitted that his Lordship is as accurate in his declaration, as voluminous in his proofs, that the rebellion in that province '*is a war between races.*' Considering, however, that long before Lord Durham left England for *Canada* British population and the British troops on one side were ranged together, in open, day and in open conflict, against Monsieur Papineau

and his deluded French adherents on the other, it may be observed that it did not require a magician, or even a politician, to make this sagacious discovery. As regards his Lordship's report on *Upper Canada*—(that keystone of our North American colonies which Lord Durham has so wilfully assailed and displaced in order to make it the foundation of his remedial recommendations)—we must observe, that his Lordship's allegations against the Lieutenant Governor, Executive Council, Legislative Council, Commons House of Assembly, and people, have been unreservedly, indignantly, and, in most instances, officially, denied, repudiated, and disproved, by the following competent witnesses, whom we will name in the order in which they have expressed themselves:

1. Sir F. Head, the late Lieut.-Governor of Upper Canada.
2. The North American Colonial Association.
3. Sir John Colborne, Governor-General of the Canadas.
4. Sir George Arthur, Lieut.-Governor of Upper Canada.
5. The Executive Council of Upper Canada.
6. The Legislative Council of Upper Canada.
7. The Commons House of Assembly of Upper Canada.
8. Her Majesty's Attorney and Solicitor General.
9. The Grand Jury of the Newcastle District.
10. Lieutenant-General Sir Peregrine Maitland, who was ten years Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada.

Neither our limits nor our inclination permit us to detail the overwhelming evidence of the foregoing witnesses, who, though widely separated from each other, appear before the country singularly united together by a testimony not only damnatory of Lord Durham's recommendations, but which convicts his Lordship of the grossest misstatements—intentional or unintentional, it matters to the public not one straw. The following extracts will, we believe, sufficiently show the nature of the evidence to which we have referred.

1. Sir Francis Head, in his Narrative, has thus replied to Lord Durham's allegations:—

"With respect to Lord Durham's report to the Queen, that my Executive Council 'seem to have taken office almost on the express condition of being mere ciphers,' I beg leave most solemnly to declare that such a condition was neither expressed nor understood.

"With respect to the allegation affecting my own character, namely, that 'the elections were carried by the unscrupulous exercise of the influence of the government,' I beg leave calmly, but unequivocally, to deny it.

"It would not be difficult to proceed with the whole of Lord Durham's report on *Upper Canada* as I have commenced, but as I have no desire unnecessarily

unnecessarily to hurt his Lordship, I have sufficiently shown its inaccuracy, to vindicate my own character from its attacks, &c. &c.

2. The North American Colonial Association, composed of most respectable merchants in the City of London, declared in a series of formal resolutions that Lord Durham's—

'statements and opinions relative to the condition of parties in Upper Canada and the other North American colonies appear calculated to encourage that portion of the population who are said by his Lordship "to desire the adoption of a republican constitution, or even an incorporation with the American union," to shock and irritate the great body of loyal inhabitants, and to induce a belief in the people of this country that the disloyal class is numerous and respectable, instead of being, as it really is, a comparatively small and contemptible minority.'

3. The present Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada, Sir George Arthur, in a despatch, dated Toronto, 17th April, 1839, says, with reference to Lord Durham's Report,—

'The members of both Houses, I find, generally consider parts of the Report which refer to Upper Canada to be in many particulars incorrect; and a committee of the House of Assembly has been consequently appointed to draw up a report upon the subject.

'They regard the Earl of Durham's scheme for the future government of Canada as essentially the same as that which was advocated by Mr. Bidwell, Doctor Rolph, and Mackenzie, and to which the great majority of the people of this province expressed their unequivocal dissent.'

4. A Report from the Legislative Council of Upper Canada states,—

'After an attentive and disinterested consideration of this subject, your committee are led to the conclusion, that the adoption of the plan proposed by the Earl of Durham must lead to the overthrow of the great colonial empire of England.

'Your committee regret that his Lordship should have confided the task of collecting information to a person, who, be he whom he may, has evidently entered on his task with the desire to exalt the opponents of the colonial government in the estimation of the High Commissioner, and to throw discredit on the statements of the supporters of British influence and British connexion.'

5. The reason which has been urged by Her Majesty's ministers for the imperial parliament not taking into consideration the recommendation from the throne for a legislative union of the Canadas, was that the Commons House of Assembly had expressed an opinion against the measure. As therefore it has been deemed advisable that such deference should be paid to their recommendations, let us consider what are the opinions which this self-same Assembly have addressed to her Majesty (respecting Lord Durham's Report) in an address to the Queen,

dated 11th of May, 1839, and by her Majesty's command laid before both houses of the imperial parliament:—

‘Since the commencement of the present session of the provincial parliament, the final Report of your Majesty's High Commissioner on the affairs of British North America has been received in this country. In this Report your Majesty's faithful subjects find many statements deeply affecting the social and political relations and condition of Upper and Lower Canada, and the recommendations of several important changes in the form and practice of the constitution. It is with much concern that your Majesty's faithful subjects find that your Majesty's High Commissioner has strongly urged the adoption of these changes by your Majesty and the imperial parliament, without waiting for the opinion that may be formed of them by the people who are to be most deeply and immediately affected by them. Under these circumstances, we have caused a Report to be drawn up by a select committee of the House of Assembly, which contains matter referring to this subject, which we respectfully submit for your Majesty's consideration.’

The Report above alluded to, submitted to the Queen by the House of Assembly, has been highly admired by the loyal population. We submit to our readers the following extracts:—

‘A document, purporting to be the Report of her Majesty's late High Commissioner, the Earl of Durham, addressed to her Majesty, on the affairs of British North America, contains matter so deeply affecting the social as well as political relations of all the provinces, especially of Upper Canada, that it would ill become your committee to pass it over in silence. At this late period of the session, it is impossible to give the statements and opinions advanced by his Lordship the extensive investigation their importance demands; but your committee will apply themselves with calmness to vindicate the people of Upper Canada, their government and legislature, from charges that imply a want of patriotism and integrity, which they know to be *unjust*, which they did not expect, and which they grieve to find advanced by a nobleman who had been sent to these provinces to heal rather than foment dissensions, and who certainly should have carefully guarded against giving currency to *unfounded, mischievous, and illiberal rumours, for the truth of which he admits he is unable to vouch.*’

The Committee conclude their Report with the following observations:—

* ‘Your Committee will here close their remarks on the various allegations in the Report of the High Commissioner that appeared to them to require particular animadversion. If, in the course of their remarks, they have been betrayed into too strong an expression of reproach or indignant refutation, they trust that it will not be ascribed to a wanton indifference to that courtesy and respectful deference that should mark the proceedings of a public body towards those of high rank and station; and, on the other hand, they trust that they will not be denied the credit of having forborne to apply animadversions of far greater severity than they have used to many parts of a Report which they can truly affirm, and which they believe they have clearly proved

to be, most unjust and unfounded, and which are calculated to have a most mischievous influence on the future destinies of these colonies.

‘ Lord Durham professes to submit to her Majesty and the British nation a true and faithful account of the state and condition of this, as well as of the other British North American provinces, and there is no doubt that it will be promulgated throughout the country by those who are gratified at finding their political principles and theories advocated and sustained by his Lordship, that there is nothing in his Report that admits of contradiction, and that whatever discredit may be attempted to be cast upon it must proceed from disappointment or vindictive feelings.

‘ Your Committee, however, are not willing to believe that the great nation to which these provinces belong, and which has hitherto extended to them its powerful, its parental protection, will hastily, and without the most full and ample information, adopt the opinions and act upon the recommendations of any individual, however high his rank, or great his talents, that involve the future destinies of her Majesty’s faithful subjects in these provinces.’

After having laid before our readers the foregoing official refutation by the Commons House of Assembly of Upper Canada of Lord Durham’s calumnies, we feel that we might close the case by requesting our readers at once to declare their verdict on the miserable document before them. The subject, however, is of such vital importance, that we will proceed with the evidence to which we have referred.

6. The grand jury of the Newcastle district (which contains two counties, forming one of the most valuable sections of Upper Canada) *unanimously* adopted a presentment, of which the following is an extract :—

‘ *District of Newcastle,* } The Jurors of our Lady the Queen upon their
TO WIT : } oaths present, that a printed book or pamphlet,
entitled, “ Report on the Affairs of British North America, from the
Earl of Durham, her Majesty’s High Commissioner, &c. &c. &c.,”
has been brought under their notice ; and the jurors aforesaid,
upon their oaths aforesaid, further present, that they have care-
fully examined the said book or pamphlet ; and the jurors aforesaid,
upon their oaths aforesaid, further present, *that the said book or
pamphlet is calculated to excite public contempt and odium against
the government and magistracy of this province ;* and the jurors aforesaid,
upon their oaths aforesaid, further present, that the said book or
pamphlet is also calculated *most injuriously to mislead the members
of the imperial parliament and the British public,* by creating in their
minds erroneous and false opinions relative to the state and condition of
this province, and with respect to the wants, feelings, sentiments, and
wishes of a very large majority of the inhabitants thereof ; *to disseminate and perpetuate, in this province, principles of democracy wholly
incompatible with monarchical institutions ; to loosen the bonds of
affection which unite us to our gracious sovereign, to the British*
empire,

empire, and to the venerated constitution of our ancestors; to resuscitate and to prevent that factious discontent and disorder which produced such deplorable and disastrous consequences, but which, though not extinguished, had in a great measure subsided; and, generally, *to endanger the peace, happiness, and prosperity of this province, against the peace of our said Sovereign Lady the Queen, her crown and dignity.*

'Grand Jury Room, May 15th, 1839.'

7. Lieutenant-General Sir Peregrine Maitland during ten years was Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada, besides being afterwards Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia: he has lately returned from an important government in India.

What, it will be asked, is the opinion of this experienced and high-minded officer on the subject of Lord Durham's Report? Why, in a reply addressed by him to the late Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada it appears that he has avowed *'his decided condemnation, with full liberty to disclose his sentiments, of Lord Durham's Report; his opinion that it gives an inaccurate and unfair description of the province and people of Upper Canada; and that it censures, ignorantly and unjustly, those who have administered the government of that province.'*

Now with this overwhelming mass of evidence (almost the whole of which has been printed and presented to parliament) before them, we calmly ask—Were not her Majesty's ministers and the imperial parliament bound by honour and common justice to repair the deadly error that had been committed in the promulgation throughout the empire and civilised world of a wicked libel, by comparing its allegations with the evidence by which they had been repudiated: for why were these latter documents gravely submitted to their attention, but for the investigation of their contents?

If the meanest of her Majesty's subjects, having been libelled before parliament by the most powerful peer in the realm, had submitted, in vindication of his innocence, one-twentieth part of as unanswerable evidence as that which has been just adduced in defence of the legislature and people of Upper Canada, would the imperial parliament with apathy have observed the accused during the whole session, writhing under injustice, and would it have left him, at the prorogation, without relief—without the acquittal to which it knew him to be entitled? Would any court of justice—would any jury in the country, with such a glaring case before them, have withheld from a man, falsely accused, their verdict? And if a solitary individual would have received this common act of justice from those before whom he had been arraigned, how infinitely more entitled to acquittal were a brave and

and loyal people, who, under cruel sufferings, and by the most determined bravery, had repelled her Majesty's enemies in all directions—and who, through the severity of two Canadian winters, had maintained for the British crown its noblest dependencies!—The evidence of their late conduct ought alone to have been sufficient to have annihilated the fabric of their virulent accuser; and when the whole history of their loyalty, when the mass of corroborative evidence which we have just adduced is weighed against the assertions of an individual who had insubordinately fled from his post—and who had brought away from it nothing but the records of five months' blundering legislation, which it had required the interference of parliament not only to correct but to palliate—it seems incredible that the legislative authorities of Upper Canada should, in the name of the people of that province, have demanded in vain that this painted butterfly should publicly be broken by parliament on the wheel upon which of his own accord he had alighted! And yet how have her Majesty's ministers and the imperial parliament dealt with this ignoble fugitive? Why the former have not only presumed publicly to compliment him on 'his industry and assiduity,' but in the House of Commons they even had the temerity to declare 'that the embarrassment of the Canadas proceeded from the *factious* objections which had been raised against the illegality of Lord Durham's ordinances, for that, had his Lordship continued at Quebec, he would no doubt successfully have overcome all his difficulties'—in short, they arithmetically argued by the rule of three—if in *five months* he had effected so much, what would he not have done had he but continued at his post for *five years*! The latter have treated him with forbearance equally incomprehensible; and surely it will appear incredible to posterity that the imperial parliament not only neglected to resent the insults offered to them by this public servant—that they not only failed to arraign him for the desertion of his post, and for his seditious appeal to 'the people' against the sovereign authority; but although, during the whole session, there were repeatedly recommended to their consideration remedial measures based on his Lordship's Report, they averted their minds from the mass of evidence by which it had been contradicted, and actually allowed a bill to be proposed, argued, and passed for the government of Lower Canada—they even allowed Lord Durham himself to stand up before them in his place, and publicly address them on the subject—without one member rising to offer a single objection to his conduct, or a solitary observation on the *calumnies* he had unofficially submitted to them!

Among those who listened to him with mysterious silence, there

there were many who could have chilled him by their frown, and who could have annihilated him by their reply; but his triumph was inexplicable, and, as if gifted with the power of repressing the noble elements that surrounded him, the imperious dictator passed through the ordeal of the session unharmed, unanswered, and unpunished!

Without pausing to reflect upon the consequences of such silence at home, what, we ask, were our North American colonies to think of this denial of justice? What other moral could they possibly draw from it than that, in return for their loyalty—in return for the sacrifices they had made in defence of their glorious institutions—the imperial parliament had condemned them to be democrats, and, consequently, that it was useless, as it was hopeless, for them to avert the decree?

And now let us consider what *has been* the fatal result. The loyal population of the Canadas,—long disturbed by a despicable minority of their own people acting under English influence, which, we regret to add, has been openly encouraged by her Majesty's ministers,—were after they themselves had quelled the rebellion, barbarously invaded by a republican population of thirteen millions, bound by no law but the rapacious will of the multitude.

Under this accumulation of misfortunes, it must be evident that nothing but supernatural exertions could have enabled men to stand against this unequal contest; but they had scarcely triumphed—they had scarcely repelled from their frontier the unprincipled attacks of their neighbours—when all of a sudden the baleful Report of her Majesty's late Lord High Commissioner is cast into the scale to sicken their hearts, unnerve their arms, and paralyze their exertions; and when, overpowered by such afflictions, they look, as their last hope, to Providence and to the imperial parliament for assistance, the latter ratifies by its silence the libel that has assailed them, and leaves them to desperation and despair—and well may every loyal Canadian subject, grey in the service of his country, exclaim with Wolsey,

'Had I but served my God with half the zeal

I served my king, he would not in mine age

Have left me naked to mine enemies!'

Under these appalling circumstances, who can wonder that the loyal population of the Canadas now feel it is necessary to secure their lives, their families, and their farms, by bending to the storm which they have not power to resist? Accordingly, men who have hitherto been distinguished both in the field and in the senate for their loyalty and devotional attachment to British institutions are now, we have too much reason to know, prudently

prudently yielding to circumstances, and are adapting their political professions to those democratic principles of government which her Majesty's ministers seem determined to establish. The accounts which by every packet arrive from Canada attest the fatal influence of Lord Durham's uncontradicted Report.

Besides the testimony of the provincial press, we have before us many letters from persons in Canada, some connected with the government and legislature, others not so circumstanced, but feeling and possessing a deep interest in the colony, stating in the strongest language the incalculable injury which Lord Durham's Report is doing in the hands of the more notorious enemies of the crown.

One gentleman (a Canadian) says—

'Lord Durham's name is used as a cloak for *the most treasonable designs*: indeed, anything may now be attempted under the pretext of sustaining the plans proposed in the "Report." The progress of the party who rally under *the Durham flag* is becoming alarming, and unless the British government screws up its courage to the point of immediately, firmly, and broadly *dencouncing the mischievous doctrines of the Report*, you may rely on it that, ere long, we shall become, as a colony, ungovernable. There is much that tickles the fancy of ambitious men in the idea of introducing the English plan of a government by the majority of the popular branch of the legislature. It has been well explained in the April "Quarterly" how irreconcilable this principle is with a state of colonial subordination, and you may rely on it that if the British government should give way in the least to this notion, and admit of any experiments of this novel and hazardous character, the charm of British connexion will be done away in the eyes of that great loyal body which, through evil report and good report, has hitherto sustained the royal cause in Canada. I can assure you that among that class I have found it discussed, and not many minutes since it was a subject of conversation with me, whether the time might not be near when the men of property in this country should have to decide between a hopeless and destructive struggle *for a government by which they would not be supported*, and a proposition of terms with the republican nation at our doors. They seem to think it would be more prudent to take the lead in what may be an inevitable change, than to immolate themselves and families in the cause of *a government which may secretly wish to get rid of them*, and, under any circumstances, they feel that they could have no prospect of quiet under the *Durham* system of colonial government. A very intelligent and loyal individual (a Canadian), whose faith in England has hitherto resisted every shock, has told me that he now feels our situation to be one of great peril, and that if her Majesty does not at once reject Lord Durham's principles, *we shall be lost as a British colony*. The fact is, as he says, that the friends of the monarchy cannot contend against the revolutionists while the latter can assert that the Queen's High Commissioner is with them, for the inference cannot

cannot be resisted that the Queen sides with the Commissioner. The subtle poison administered under the Durham label is working in every part of our system, and must be fatal, *unless the Queen herself applies, and that instantly, the proper antidote.*"

Another letter from a Canadian of great talent, probity, and influence, states—

' Lord Durham's Report is working its sure and certain mischief: it has revived the schemes and spirits of the revolutionary party. "DURHAM AND REFORM," "DURHAM AND LIBERTY," are now inscribed on flags, and paraded about by those, and those *only*, who are known to be disloyal, and who aim at separation from the mother country. Whatever may be said to the contrary by a venal press, there is not an honest or loyal man in Upper Canada that does not execrate Lord Durham as the greatest curse that has ever yet been inflicted on these provinces. . . . Every day convinces me more and more that the continuance of the connexion of these provinces with the mother country, even for a short period of time, entirely depends on the course the imperial government will now take with respect to them; and unless Lord Durham's pernicious theories be *plainly and unequivocally denounced and declared wholly inadmissible by the British government and parliament*, it will be in vain for those who sincerely desire to preserve the union to prevent its dissolution.'

Another letter from one of the very highest official authorities in the Canadas, whose name, if we could but mention it, would be deemed conclusive, states,—

' The "Report" has set all the reformers and republicans in motion again, and whilst they were cautious under Mackenzie's banner, they are exceedingly *bold* under the Earl of Durham's colours. A *spark* was enough to set this community in flames, but the High Commissioner has by his "responsible government" scheme, thrown a *firebrand* amongst the people. The situation of the country is lamentable, and I much fear the worst *is to come*.'

What an affecting and melancholy picture do the foregoing letters pourtray! What a fearful moral do they offer to the mother country itself, which is seen hourly sinking under the malignant encouragement her Majesty's ministers are affording at home to the selfsame principles which, under the flag of 'Durham and Reform,' are now sickening loyalty and strengthening rebellion in the Canadas!

It is now too late even for the imperial legislature to cure the malady we have created. The Durham dose, forcibly administered, has culpably been left to operate; and though the countenance of our noble North American colonies may for a short time appear, to a superficial observer, to preserve a healthy aspect, no cosmetic that parliament next year may deem it proper to apply—no outward ornament which it may prescribe—no cooling mixture that in February, 1840, it may determine to administer, can possibly

possibly neutralise that arsenical document which the imperial parliament should have immediately caused to be ejected, and which, we humbly repeat, ought never, by her Majesty's government, to have been administered either to the parliament or to the empire, but which should have been left to moulder in one of the pigeon-holes of the Colonial Office, out of sight, out of reach, and labelled 'POISON.'

Our argument ends in a circle at the point from which it started. *Why, we ask, was Lord Durham allowed to act officially as Lord High Commissioner of the Canadas AFTER HE HAD DESERTED FROM HIS POST?*

III. Let us consider whether her Majesty's Government and the Imperial Legislature have duly weighed the evidence contained in Sir Francis Head's despatches, which early in the session were printed and laid before both Houses of Parliament?

Shortly after the Duke of Wellington had forced Lord Melbourne (notwithstanding his Lordship's prophecy that it would prove 'exceedingly inconvenient') to produce these despatches, the ex-governor, finding himself attacked by Lord Durham's Report, published, in self-defence, his own *Narrative*, of which, as it has already been reviewed by us, we will here only say, that in the history of parliament there never has appeared a document which a government were more bound in honour to repel: for Sir Francis Head, in his showing of the case, not only accused, and, we must add, apparently, *convicted* her Majesty's ministers of having been accomplices in the infamous conspiracy against the crown, which, by the loyalty of the militia of Upper Canada, and by the bravery of the troops in the lower province, had been suppressed—but, in his concluding despatch from Toronto, the Lieutenant-Governor most solemnly and emphatically transmitted through the government to his Sovereign the following astounding accusation:—

'MY LORD,—It has long been notorious to every British subject in the Canadas, that your lordship's under-secretary, the author of our colonial despatches, is a rank republican. His sentiments, his conduct, and his political character, are here alike detested, and I enclose to your lordship Mr. M'Kenzie's last newspaper, which, traitorous as it is, contains nothing more conducive to treason than the extracts which, as its text, it exultingly quotes from the published opinions of her Majesty's under-secretary of state for the colonies!

'As I entertain no sentiments of animosity against Mr. Stephen, it has been with very great reluctance that I have mentioned his name; but, being deeply sensible that this province has been signally protected by an Omnipotent Providence during the late unnatural rebellion, I feel it my duty, in retiring from this continent, to divide, through your lordship,

lordship, to my Sovereign, my opinion of the latent cause of our unfortunate misgovernment of the Canadas.

‘ I have the honour to be, my Lord, &c. &c.

(Signed)

‘ F. B. HEAD.’

We are as willing as her Majesty’s ministers, or as even Mr. Stephen himself can be, to consider as innocent all those who have not been proved to be guilty, and to receive with extreme caution official *ex parte* accusations, however strongly they may seem to be supported: at the same time it is undeniable that when the Lieutenant-Governor of a British colony gravely accuses her Majesty’s ministers in general, and an under-secretary of state in particular, of a course of conduct amounting as nearly as possible to treason, guilt must rest either upon the accuser or upon the accused. Even if the Lieutenant-Governor had offered his accusations after he had retired from his post, they would surely have been as worthy of attention as the allegations which are contained in Lord Durham’s posthumous ‘*Report*,’ but the serious accusations to which we allude were transmitted to the Queen’s ministers by Sir Francis Head while he was yet her Majesty’s representative in the colony, and at a moment when he was supported not only by the people and by the legislature of Upper Canada—which, during the insurrection in the lower province, he was governing without troops—but by public addresses from the legislatures of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and from the British inhabitants of Lower Canada. Assailed from such a public position, surely her Majesty’s ministers were bound in honour not to shrink from repelling charges which had been so directly and openly brought against them!

When Mr. Hume and his associate Dr. Duncombe (who had travelled from Upper Canada to England under a false name, and for whose apprehension as a *traitor* a reward of 500*l.* has been since offered) appeared in Downing Street as the accusers of Sir Francis Head, surely they (we mean Hume and Duncombe) were not more worthy of belief—their allegations were not more entitled to investigation than those which have been adduced against the system and the ‘latent’ guide of the Colonial Office by Sir Francis Head: yet it will appear from the following extract of a despatch, dated 7th October, 1836, and laid before parliament, that her Majesty’s ministers determined, by arguments which now recoil upon themselves, to arrest Sir Francis Head’s promotion until he could repel—as the published report of the commons’ house of assembly of Upper Canada triumphantly did repel for him—the accusations of two men so lean in reputation as Hume and Duncombe:—

‘ On the day before the prorogation of parliament, a petition from Mr. Duncombe was presented to the House of Commons, in which that gentleman, claiming for himself the credit due to him as a member of

of

of the assembly of Upper Canada, and pledging his personal honour to the truth of his statements, made various allegations, impugning your character and conduct in respect to the recent elections. A charge, *vague and general in its nature, or proceeding from an anonymous or unworthy antagonist*, might have been passed over without notice; but this is an accusation, specific as well as grave, and preferred before the House of Commons by a gentleman who has himself the honour of a seat in the provincial assembly. *Such imputations, advanced on such authority, in such a place, are entitled, at least to that degree of respect which shall secure for them an attentive hearing and a patient inquiry.*

‘It remains, therefore, that you should furnish me with your answer to Mr. Duncombe’s petition.’

The accusations made by Sir Francis Head against her Majesty’s ministers, and against one of their under-secretaries, were ‘not vague nor general in their nature, or proceeding from an anonymous or unworthy antagonist;’ on the contrary, they were transmitted to the Queen by her Majesty’s representative, who, in support of his allegations, furnished the government and the country with a list of witnesses (at present in England)—such as Sir Peregrine Maitland, Sir Archibald Campbell, Chief Justice Robinson, and others of equally irreproachable character.

What, therefore, but an inward conviction of guilt could have prevented her Majesty’s ministers from practising as they had preached? And when it was observed that they flinched from their guns, why, we cannot refrain from asking, did no one of their political opponents in either house of parliament pass the word, ‘*Clear for action!*’ and force them before the country, either to defend themselves, or surrender? But casting party tactics aside, we beg to ask whether it was not the *duty* of the imperial parliament, by whom the despatches of Sir Francis Head had been demanded, and before whom they had been laid, gravely to investigate their contents? Otherwise, for what object were they required? Whatever might have been the reasons, good, bad, or indifferent, which induced her Majesty’s ministers to agree among themselves to stand before the country in disgraceful silence, under a charge of conspiracy against the throne,—yet surely *parliament* ought to have felt that the dignity of the crown, and the character of the country in foreign courts, rendered it absolutely necessary that Sir Francis Head should not be permitted with impunity to disgrace her Majesty’s government! However incredible his allegations might appear, and whatever might be the prejudice of individuals against him, yet the perseverance with which during the whole session he maintained his assertions, contrasted with the abject silence of the accused, was a circumstance, to say the least, of a most suspicious appearance. The session, however, was allowed to close without this extraordinary case being even mentioned!

We will not now inquire where the guilt lies : whether on Sir Francis Head, on her Majesty's ministers, or on the imperial parliament. It matters nothing to us whether or not Sir Francis Head is justified in complaining that, after having grappled single-handed with so formidable a conspiracy, he has been ungenerously deserted by parliament. We cannot, however, but observe that whatever may be the cause of the mysterious silence respecting these allegations, no other inference can be drawn from it by the British nation than that, in the opinion of parliament, it is a matter of indifference that the authority of the Queen has been shown to have been employed for a series of years in depressing, harassing, and insulting the loyal, in exalting to stations of trust and confidence the bitterest enemies of the state, and in planting in the very department in Downing Street from which he should have been particularly excluded, an individual, who, to say the least of him, has betrayed no very strong antipathy to the 'rankest' of republican institutions.

The effect of this most natural inference upon our North American colonies, which, as we have shown, are already sinking under Lord Durham's Report, it is lamentable to contemplate. 'What encouragement,' they already say, 'have we any longer to risk our lives and properties in defence of the institutions of the British empire, when we find not only that the whole influence of the home government is against us, but that, while one under-secretary for the colonies is publicly declared by our Lieutenant-Governor to be "a rank republican," his colleague, the other under-secretary, no sooner quits the department on promotion, than he avows republican sentiments, of the most ultra description, by publicly voting for the ballot ! Deserted by the imperial parliament, betrayed by the colonial-office, and overpowered by our enemies, our hopes are extinct !'

IV. Let us now consider whether her Majesty's government and the Imperial Parliament have duly noticed the unexampled loyalty of the British North American colonies ?

When the province of Upper Canada, in the absence of the Queen's troops, was observed effectually to crush in three days a rebellion engendered and nurtured by the malign influence of Downing Street—when 20,000 Canadian yeomen and backwoodsmen, Churchmen, Romanists, and Dissenters, were seen in the depth of winter to leave their families and farms to defend the glorious institutions of the British empire—when by night as well as by day, without great coats, gloves, or blankets, they were seen cheerfully performing this noble duty—when it was observed that wherever they were invaded by large bodies of American citizens, they triumphantly repelled them from

from British soil—and when it became known that out of all the prisoners who fell into their hands not one (for more than a year) was sacrificed to popular fury, but that, under a small escort, they were severally conducted unharmed to the calm judgment of the law—when these things were done, the North American colonies felt it to be their duty as British subjects to applaud the militia of Upper Canada, to sympathise in their sufferings, to cheer them in their exertions, and to offer them most cordially their support.

From New Brunswick the following communication was accordingly addressed by its Lieutenant-Governor, Major-General Sir John Harvey, to his Excellency Sir John Colborne :—

‘ *Government House, Fredericton, Jan. 28th, 1839.*

‘ SIR,—In compliance with the desire of the general assembly of this province, I have great pleasure in transmitting to your Excellency the sum of 1000*l.*, voted by the House of Assembly, and warmly concurred in by the legislative council, for the purpose of being applied, under your Excellency’s directions, to the relief of the immediate necessities of such of their loyal fellow-subjects in the Canadas and their families as have been sufferers from the recent inroads of brigands from the United States. I cannot refrain from acquainting your Excellency that this, the first vote “in supply” of the present session, by the representatives of the people of this loyal province, was passed by them, not only without a single dissenting voice, but *literally by acclamation*, the whole house rising (as would have done the whole people), and *cheering* upon the occasion.

‘ I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

‘ J. HARVEY.’

‘ P.S.—Private subscriptions in aid of the same object are in progress in several parts of this province, which I shall be happy in making myself the medium of forwarding to your Excellency, or to any committee which may be appointed to receive them.’

The House of Assembly of Nova Scotia, animated with the same determination to repel the faithless invasion of the Americans, *unanimously* passed resolutions for embodying volunteers and draft companies of militia, amounting to 8000 men. Moreover, they most nobly ‘authorised the expenditure of *one hundred thousand pounds*, if it should be required, to repel the aggressions on the sister province.’ Not satisfied with passing this vote unanimously, the house actually rose and gave three cheers for the province which had been invaded, and three cheers for her most gracious Majesty Queen Victoria.

Besides this general assistance, the principal inhabitants of Halifax transmitted through their Lieutenant-Governor, Lieut.-General Sir Colin Campbell, to Sir John Colborne, the sum of 49*l.* 1*s.* 8*d.* raised by subscription ‘for the relief of those who had suffered by the late outrageous attempt on the Canadas,’

Sir

Sir John Colborne being requested to make known to these brave men 'the estimation in which their meritorious conduct and loyal feelings will ever be held by their brethren in Nova Scotia.' When the 23rd Regiment was ordered from Nova Scotia to assist the adjoining province,—

'We learn from the Halifax papers, that during the whole of the route in Nova Scotia, the farmers and other inhabitants hurried in all directions with their teams, carriages, and waggons, to meet the soldiers, and convey them and their wives and children from place to place gratuitously.'

The legislature of Bermuda, in alluding to the base invasion of the British North American colonies by the citizens of the adjoining republic, enthusiastically responded 'to the sentiment which had been so forcibly expressed by the council and assembly of the neighbouring province of Nova Scotia.'

By the Commons House of Assembly of Upper Canada the following address was unanimously passed:—

'To His Excellency Sir George Arthur, K.C.H., &c. &c.'

'May it please your Excellency,—We, her Majesty's, &c., beg leave humbly to represent to your Excellency, that this house has learned with feelings of painful anxiety and regret, the proceedings of the people of "Maine," with respect to the jurisdiction over the "disputed territory," which has so long and unfortunately tended to excite and promote discord between Great Britain and the United States; that this house would be alike wanting in gratitude and patriotism were we to hesitate to assure the gallant New Brunswickers that however we should regret a war with the United States, and would deprecate any display of improper feeling toward that country, we nevertheless pledge ourselves, should such a result proceed from the conduct of "Maine" on this occasion, that *we will support, maintain, and defend the rights of Great Britain, the honour of the crown, and the unity of the empire, with our energies and our lives.* And we request that your Excellency will without loss of time inform his Excellency Sir John Harvey of the feelings and views entertained by the people of this province, as expressed in this house.

'ALLAN M'NAB, Speaker.'

'Commons House of Assembly, March 22nd, 1839.'

Besides these formal resolutions from the legislatures of our American colonies, innumerable addresses, of which the following is a sample, were transmitted to the representative of their Sovereign from various towns and townships in the provinces:—

'To His Excellency Sir George Arthur, &c., &c.'

'May it please your Excellency,—We, her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the magistrates, freeholders, and inhabitants of the town and township of Brantford, approach your Excellency with sentiments of high respect for the representative of our most gracious Queen.

** Impressed every day more and more with a due sense of the blessings*

ings enjoyed by a people living under mild and equitable laws, faithfully administered, we are proud of our connexion with the most powerful and enlightened empire in the world; and view with corresponding abhorrence and indignation the attempts recently made by wicked and turbulent men to subvert the constitution given to this and the adjoining province of Lower Canada by the mother country.

‘We desire it to be generally known, and distinctly understood, that the inhabitants of Upper Canada, in common with the other subjects of Great Britain, enjoy liberty and rational freedom, in the true sense and meaning of those terms, in a higher degree than any nation on the face of the globe, and to the utmost extent compatible with the protection of person and property, and the due order and regulation of society.

‘We would therefore tell the traitors who have sought to overturn our revered and hallowed institutions, and the lawless banditti by whom our shores have been menaced, that “*we want no change, and least of all such change as they would bring us.*”

‘We shall be found ever ready to support your Excellency in the constitutional exercise of the high powers with which you have been invested, and will at any moment come forth, heart and hand, to defend our country and its laws against the attacks of all assailants, domestic or foreign.’

[Signed by all the resident magistrates and 363 freeholders and inhabitants.]

Now, considering that her Majesty’s ministers had deemed it their duty to advise the Queen to transmit to both houses of parliament Lord Durham’s black-jaundiced picture of the discontentment of the British colonies, and of their rational admiration of the republican institutions of the United States, surely, on the common principle of ‘*audi alteram partem*,’ it was also their duty at least to have brought before the same tribunal the foregoing refutations of the libel.

Considering the enormous expense of defending our colonies for any length of time, by troops alone, surely it would have been politic as well as just to have encouraged the spirit of self-defence which these addresses so luxuriantly evinced! It did not, however, suit the dark policy of her Majesty’s ministers to unveil to the public eye either the virtuous attachment of our colonies to British institutions, or their deliberate detestation of mob government. ‘*The great difficulty we have to contend with,*’ one of Lord Durham’s attendants is reported to have unblushingly observed in Upper Canada, ‘*is YOUR LOYALTY!*’ It was a stumbling block to Lord Durham wherever he went, just as the loyalty of the North American colonies had been to her Majesty’s ministers a hydra-headed enemy, which, in spite of all their endeavours, they had for a long time been totally unable to put to death.

But although a treacherous government could not afford to notice the noble unanimity of our colonies; although it could not fairly

fairly be expected of such ministers that, by the breath of applause, *they* should fan the embers of loyalty into a flame which would inevitably consume *them*—yet was there no one in either house of parliament competent to do so? When the subject of Canada, over and over again, was brought before parliament—when remedial measures were, in the most formal manner, proposed, rejected, or deferred—where, we ask, were those statesmen, who, with overwhelming arguments, might have called upon the legislature, by a short vote or resolution, at least to inform the North American colonies, who were fighting in defence of British institutions and of British territory, that the imperial parliament sympathised with their sufferings, applauded their bravery, thanked them for the manner in which they had successfully maintained the valuable portion of that empire to which they had declared themselves so proud to belong, and, above all, promised them assistance and support?

Animated by such a vote, the militia of our North American provinces would have at once formed an impenetrable phalanx of defence; but after having thirsted so long for the approbation of parliament, it is really melancholy to reflect, that in cheerless silence the session should have passed away without our affording these brave men the nourishment they had so richly deserved, or without either house responding in any way to the votes and resolutions of the colonial legislatures. When the *heart* of the British oak shows this decay, how inevitable must be the fate of its *branches*!

V. *Lastly*, let us consider whether her Majesty's government and the Imperial Parliament have duly resented the repeated invasions of British territory by American citizens, or have duly noticed those who have fought and bled in defence of the empire and its institutions?

It is with the deepest regret that we enter upon this portion of our inquiry. If we could be guided merely by our feelings, we would readily pass over the documents to which we are about to refer, but a sense of public duty impels us to the task of laying before our readers what it is impolitic that the country should refrain from considering.

The emphatic representations of Sir John Colborne, of Sir F. Head, of Sir George Arthur, and of Mr. Fox, our minister at Washington, having been most culpably disregarded by her Majesty's ministers, on the 20th of November, 1838, Sir George Arthur made the following desponding appeal to the Colonial Secretary:—

'It is not in my power, my Lord, to retrieve the almost withered hopes of Upper Canada; nor will the suffering inhabitants be able of themselves to sustain their fortitude in the immediate neighbourhood of a powerful

a powerful hostile population, and in the rear of a rebellious province. I see very clearly that if the present state of things be suffered to continue for a much longer period, there must be a general wreck of property.

'The means, my Lord, of averting these impending evils are not to be sought for in the province, BUT IN THE MOTHER COUNTRY; and all will depend upon the opinion of the British government as to the desire and power of England to retain the country in the face of all opposition.'

There are many other published despatches, especially from Mr. Fox, her Majesty's Minister at Washington, most earnestly calling the attention of her Majesty's government to the enormities committed upon our North American colonies by American citizens. We pass them over, however, in order to quote the following passages of two reports from the constitutional representatives of the people of Upper Canada, in provincial parliament assembled, transmitted to her Majesty's government by two successive governors.

On the 17th of March, 1838, the Lieutenant-Governor transmitted to the Colonial Secretary the following communication, which has been laid before both Houses of Parliament:—

'To the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty.

'Most gracious Sovereign,—We, your Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of Upper Canada, in provincial parliament assembled, most humbly beg leave to transmit to your Majesty certain resolutions passed by this House, having reference to the state of affairs between this your Majesty's province of Upper Canada, and the United States of America (a nation held to be in peace and amity with your Majesty's government), which have transpired since the commencement of the late most foul and unnatural rebellion in this province; and we do most humbly and earnestly beseech your Majesty most graciously to be pleased to take such steps as shall in your Majesty's wisdom be deemed necessary and effective in obtaining *fit reparation to the British empire for the insult and injuries committed on your Majesty's loyal subjects of this province*, as well as to protect them from similar aggression and injury for the time to come.

'Commons' House of Assembly,

'15 Feb., 1838.

ALLAN N. M'NAB,

Speaker.'

This appeal to her Majesty having been productive of no beneficial result, the Commons House of Assembly transmitted the following year, through a different Lieutenant-Governor (Sir George Arthur), a second address to their Sovereign, in which, after most affectingly appealing for assistance against the renewed invasions of the Americans, they added—

'It is not for your Majesty's subjects in these colonies to point out to your Majesty the means that should be adopted to put an end to these outrages; but, as the representatives of the people of Upper Canada, we venture humbly, but confidently, to declare that these outrages never

will cease until your Majesty shall have announced to the government of the United States that your Majesty holds it responsible for the conspiracies and invasions formed and conducted by the citizens of the republic to overthrow your Majesty's government on this continent, and to murder and destroy your Majesty's subjects, for no other reason than that they are loyal and faithful to their Sovereign's person and government,' &c. &c.

Not satisfied with this, the Commons House of Assembly of Upper Canada—(as if determined that, before they surrendered to democracy, nothing should be wanting on their part to satisfy the civilised world, as well as posterity, that they had made every constitutional effort in their power to maintain their exalted station, to resist the tyranny of mob government, and to maintain on the continent of America British institutions)—addressed to the Queen and to the imperial parliament a most able and powerful report, in which, at very great length, they detail and describe the series of unparalleled aggressions committed against their persons and property by American citizens.

This report, after referring to the invasion of Navy Island, to the occupation by the Americans of Bois Blanc Island, and to the cruel attack upon the town of Amherstburg, states,

'On the 22nd of February, 1838, upwards of 400 American brigands, armed and openly organised and recruited in the state of New York, assembled at a place called French Creek, from whence they marched in military array and took possession of Hickory Island, within the British territory.

'About the same period 300 or 400 pirates from the state of Michigan established themselves on Fighting Island (belonging to her Majesty), and on being repulsed by Colonel Townsend, of the 24th regiment, assisted by the militia, they left behind them a field-piece and a large number of muskets, perfectly new, bearing the mark of the United States army, and known to be the property of the government of that republic: shortly afterwards about 400 or 500 men, headed by an American of wealth and influence, invaded her Majesty's Island of Pointe-au-Pelé: the brigands, upon taking possession of this island, besides making prisoners of the British inhabitants, robbed them of their cattle, corn, and other property, which they transported into the United States: on the approach of a small detachment of British troops, who came to defend them, these brigands commenced a fire upon our soldiers, thirty of whom out of ninety they shot down, besides killing one of the Canadian militia—and on reaching the American shore, these ruffians were received with acclamation by their fellow-citizens.

'On the 30th of May, the British steamer the Sir Robert Peel, a new vessel, valued at 10,000*l.*, was, in the middle of the night, boarded from the American shore by a party who, armed and disguised, rushed into the cabins, hurried the ladies from their beds, with brutal violence drove them on shore, and after pillaging the passengers and the vessel, towed

towed the latter into the stream, burned her, and then returned to the United States.

Although the majority of these assailants were well known in the state of New York, only one or two were arrested, who, being placed on their trial, were, notwithstanding the plainest evidence of their guilt, almost without hesitation acquitted by the jury empanelled to try them. Shortly afterwards 150 brigands invaded the township of Pelham, where they burnt the buildings of those who had defended themselves from their murderous attack, and after robbing these Canadians of their property, they stripped them even of their clothing.

In the month of July a party, supposed to consist of about fifty, crossed the St. Clair river from a place called Palmer in the United States, robbed and imprisoned the Canadians, and then returned.

About the same time a British subject of the name of Carey, an officer of militia, was shot in the night by a set of murderers, who it was well known were from the opposite shore.

In the month of November the dwelling-house of Sheriff Hamilton at Queenston was attempted to be destroyed; Captain Usher was attacked in the night and murdered; and both these outrages were committed by American citizens living in the neighbourhood of Buffalo, where they are well known, and where it has been credibly affirmed that the murderers of Captain Usher have openly boasted of the bloody deed.*

It had been clearly ascertained that within the jurisdiction of the United States a secret combination or conspiracy of vast extent, including many of the most wealthy citizens of the republic, as well as officers of the general and state governments, and possessed of great resources in money and military stores, was, and for some time had been, in active progress for the purpose of waging war upon the Canadas; that this association extended to every town and village along the frontier; that the lowest estimate of the confederates was 40,000; that a pretended bank was organised, to be established and maintained by the seizure of public and private property in the Canadian provinces, and that the chief officers who had been chosen to compose the "new republic" were all citizens of the United States.

A body of about 600 of these conspirators, having obtained the assistance of the largest American steam-boat on Lake Ontario (called the United States) and two large schooners, embarked at Oswego and from other American ports, with artillery, muskets, ammunition, and provisions, all of which were put on board the different vessels publicly, and in open day, without interruption by any magistrate or other public officer: with this force, headed by an American citizen named Birge, a descent on the 12th of November was made upon her Majesty's territory near Prescott, where they killed and wounded a considerable number of British subjects: about the same time an armed body of about 400 brigands embarked from the United States in

* In an American newspaper it has lately been admitted that Lett, the murderer of Captain Usher, in passing through Rochester, New York, had exultingly shown the carbine with which he had assassinated his victim.

a steam-boat called the Champlain, and cruelly attacked the village of Windsor,' &c. &c.

The Commons House of Assembly of Upper Canada, in closing their observations on the cruel invasions which the province had suffered since their last unsuccessful address to the Queen, with mingled feelings of pride and indignation inform her Majesty and the imperial parliament that they

'feel it due to the honour and character of their fellow-subjects in this province to record the fact, that in no instance that can be traced did a single resident of Upper Canada, of any class or origin, unite himself with the assailants after they had landed in the province. Not only were the brave defenders of the province shot down and deliberately murdered by their fiendish assailants, but their dead bodies were mangled and mutilated and hung up as objects of scorn and derision to these inhuman monsters. The body, of an intrepid and promising young officer, Lieutenant Johnson, of the 83rd regiment, was thus treated at Prescott, and the lifeless remains of Doctor Home were exposed to similar indignities in the west, where also a noble-minded negro, who probably had escaped from a land of slavery to one where he hoped long to enjoy British freedom, was cut down and slaughtered, because he refused to join the band of murderers who called upon him to assist in the destruction of his benefactors.

'And these deeds of wickedness and deepest crime,' (the Canadian House of Assembly justly observe to her Majesty's ministers, whose consciences should have writhed under the remark,) 'were perpetrated by men claiming to be citizens of the most enlightened nation in the world, and who professed to enter the province for the purpose of conferring freedom and equal laws,—general happiness and prosperity upon its inhabitants!

'It is now an admitted and notorious truth that, in every one of the numerous instances of invasion of these provinces by the brigands, the arms of the United States were used by them, and found in their possession: while the steam-boats and schooners belonging to their most wealthy merchants were publicly employed in conveying hundreds of men and quantities of military stores and provisions from their chief cities and towns along the frontier to the places of attack. It is equally certain, that during the last summer and autumn, the preparations which were making to invade the provinces and murder its loyal inhabitants were known and encouraged by officers of the general and state governments, by justices of the peace, and by citizens of all classes and denominations. Public meetings were called in many places, and attended by persons of the description mentioned, who harangued the populace, calling upon them to aid in overthrowing British authority in the colonies, and subscribing money to accomplish that object. Not long before the attack on Prescott, a meeting of this description occurred in the city of New York, at which two of the principal officers of the customs, persons who held their appointments from the president and government of the United States, took an open and active part,

part, one of them acting as vice-president, the other as secretary of the meeting;—yet no notice appears to have been taken by their superiors, of conduct which, in England at least, would have led to their immediate dismissal and punishment.

‘Notwithstanding the repeated invasions that have taken place, the murders that have been committed, the acts of piracy and arson that have been perpetrated by thousands of persons who are well known, and who are now living unmolested in the adjoining states, openly boasting of their infractions of the laws of the Union as well as of this country, not one of them has been subjected, so far as your committee are aware, to any legal punishment. Neither does it seem in any degree probable that any of them will be molested.* In like manner the conspiracy so extensively organised during the last summer and autumn, for the overthrow of the government of the country, although undoubtedly known to hundreds of persons holding official situations, was not only not suppressed, but received direct encouragement and support from those whose duty it was to break it up, and to expose and punish all engaged in it.’

Now, if such an affecting memorial of sufferings—if such a simple tale of unjustifiable persecution had been addressed to the ancient Romans, even by their slaves, what splendid orations would have burst from the mouths of the indignant senate, and with what noble eloquence would the dignity, the pride, and the power of that mighty empire have been displayed! But the people of the Canadas are our fellow-subjects—their fertile soil is as much an integral portion of the empire as St. James’s Palace, or as the site of the houses of the imperial parliament—while the loyalty they have lately evinced entitles them, perhaps more than the inhabitants of any other portion of the empire, to the especial protection of the sovereign. Yet what notice have the imperial parliament taken of the appeal which before the civilised world has so emphatically been submitted to them? What measures have they taken to redress the insults and the enormities which have been brought before them by the Governor-General, by two Lieutenant-Governors of the North American colonies, by her Majesty’s minister, Mr. Henry Fox, by the legislatures of these provinces in general, and by the representatives of the people of Upper Canada in particular? NONE!

We have heard occasionally during the session of parliament of the Vixen, and of the forcible abduction of a foreign pilot from under our flag at Vera Cruz, but who has heard a question asked, or a remark made in the British parliament from the beginning

* Since this report has been printed, the notorious M’Kenzie, having become unpopular in the State of New York, has been brought to trial. Instead, however, of receiving the punishment awarded by the laws of the United States for an infringement of neutrality, namely, a fine of 3000 dollars and imprisonment for three years, the sentence passed upon this criminal by the American judge was a fine of ten dollars, with eighteen months’ imprisonment, but without hard labour.

of the session to the end, about the destruction of the valuable steamer the Sir Robert Peel—the plunder of her cargo—the violence to her passengers?—and who has even talked of demanding reparation for the atrocious conduct of 300 American citizens, who in open day came armed from a populous city of the United States, and burnt the Thames steamer? Who has heard one word of regret—a single expression of indignation, or a demand for retribution for the thirty British soldiers who were so barbarously shot down upon their own soil by a horde of American citizens? Among the many naval and military officers who are justly the pride of our country, and the ornament of our House of Commons, was there not one to stand up publicly to mourn over the untimely fate of her Majesty's troops—to demand what provision had been made for their widows and their orphans, and, regardless of majorities or minorities, to appeal to the honour and the character of mankind for retribution?

However dead the House might have been to this appeal, the very attitude of a veteran officer standing up alone in such a cause would have been enthusiastically applauded by every military nation on the globe; and—though he had but one arm left to raise against them—which of her Majesty's ministers would have dared before the people of England to have opposed him, or even recalcitantly have attempted 'to cough him down'?

'Go, my son,' said the old Vicar of Wakefield to his boy, 'and if you fall, though distant, exposed, and unwept by those that love you, the most precious tears are those with which heaven bedews the unburied head of a soldier!' But, her Majesty's ministers deem it 'liberal' to declare '*Nous avons changé tout cela*;' and as a melancholy illustration of their miserable maxim, let us for a moment consider how they have been permitted by the imperial parliament to deal with Captain Drew and Lieut. M'Cormack, R.N., who performed *under orders* the first brilliant naval exploit of her Majesty's reign.

Could language, we humbly ask, be stronger than the official recommendation to the government which has been submitted to parliament from the late Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada, for their promotion? Could the petition of the latter officer who, desperately wounded by five gun-shots, has lost the use of an arm, upon which his family in the back-woods depended, be more unassumingly and more affectingly worded? Could any address to her Majesty have been more generously conceived or more forcibly expressed than the following?

'To the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty.

'Most gracious Sovereign,

'We, your Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Council and House of Assembly of the Province of Upper Canada in
Provincial

Provincial Parliament assembled, most respectfully represent to your Majesty that it would be a source of unbounded satisfaction to us, if it should graciously please your Majesty to confer some mark of your royal approbation on a brave and gallant naval officer who performed with equal skill, bravery, and discretion, a most important public service, whilst an island belonging to your Majesty was invaded from the United States of America by the citizens of that country while professing to be at peace with your Majesty. These daring and desperate adventurers, *having occupied a portion of your Majesty's territory, held it in utter defiance of your Majesty's right and authority*, by the employment of a piratical vessel called the *Caroline*, which was carrying to this lawless assemblage of men arms and munitions of war from the said States, for the purpose of continuing a contest against your Majesty's possessions and authority. The destruction of this piratical vessel was confided by the gallant officer who commanded the frontier of your Majesty's territory, to *Andrew Drew*, Esquire, a Commander of the Royal Navy, whose bravery, skilfulness, and intrepidity, were the theme of general admiration. And we, your Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, would be highly gratified, should it comport with your Majesty's gracious wishes, that *some mark of the Royal favour should be manifested towards an officer who proved how well he knew in what manner to support the glory of the British arms, and the honour of his country!*

In the face of such solemn appeals from the three branches of the provincial legislature, what must be the feelings of the loyal inhabitants of our North American provinces when they observe not only that these two officers have been denied their promotion, but that, as if to drive the Canadas to desperation and despair, her Majesty's ministers have seized every opportunity of publicly complimenting and treating the Americans with marked distinction, as if to prove to them the truth of their own two favourite axioms, that the harder they strike Great Britain, the more malleable, or in other words the softer she becomes, and 'THAT THERE IS NOTHING UNDER HEAVEN MORE CONTEMPTIBLE THAN THE ASS-BORN POLICY OF THE ENGLISH GOVERNMENT.' *

Her Majesty's ministers, who have treasonably promoted over the heads of the Queen's loyal subjects, Papineau, Bedart, Debartz, &c. &c., and who would willingly also have raised above them Bidwell and O'Connell, obdurately turn from the claims of Captain Drew and Lieutenant M'Cormack. When

* 'If England' (says the 'Monroe Democrat' in informing its readers of the shameful pardon which had been granted by British ministers to notorious Canadian rebels) 'deems it *impolitic* to punish its own subjects, all of whom have pleaded guilty to the charge of treason, and some of whom were taken in arms against their country, it can hardly be deemed necessary by our government to punish with severity the individuals who have been unfortunately found guilty of merely attempting to get up an expedition against one of England's colonies.'

Esau exclaimed 'Hast thou but *one* blessing, my father? Bless me, even me, also, O my father!'—the parent's benediction followed the appeal; but the curse of the British government still rests upon Drew, and it certainly cannot be denied, that for her Majesty's ministers all of a sudden to promote a man for *defending* British institutions would be an act totally inconsistent with the whole course of what they have termed their '*liberal policy*.'

Accordingly, no sooner did the Queen's government lately learn that Captain Sandom, whom they had ungenerously put in command on the Canada lakes over the head of Captain Drew, had put that gallant officer under arrest, merely for leaving his vessel to pay a short visit to his wife and children in the Backwoods—(although, he it stated, Captain Drew solemnly declares that he had previously obtained Captain Sandom's leave to do so)—than the Admiralty, grasping at this opportunity to court favour with the republican party, ordered Captain Drew, who has been fourteen years a commander, and gained every step in his profession by actions, TO BE SUPERSEDED, and to be placed upon half-pay!!! In vain has he solicited to be 'tried by a court-martial!' in vain has he respectfully remonstrated at being thus punished by the government of his country without trial or defence!—but when Parliament meets the hour of retribution will arrive.

This un-British '*policy*' has at last driven our North American provinces to the desperate remedy of preparing to desert an empire which, in a manner unparalleled in history, *has deserted THEM*. The British parliament offers them no protection—the British flag waves, or rather hangs, above them, the emblem of weakness and vacillation. Our colonists are *ashamed* of their parent state—there remains nothing for them to suffer but the death-struggle which is to sever them from us for ever—the silence of parliament has been to their revered institutions that of the grave!

In England, extraordinary circumstances may have placed in power men who are either not sufficiently sensible of the honour of the nation, and of the protection due to its subjects, or who, to say the least, have not courage to maintain them; and circumstances may still continue them in office contrary to the wishes and feelings of the great body of their fellow-subjects;—but surely before the close of the late session it ought not to have been left a matter of doubt either to this country or to the world, that if the British nation submitted to such indignities, there were those in the imperial parliament who submitted to them with impatience and with shame, and who had at least the *will* to serve our colonists, though they unfortunately wanted the *power*.

If our North American colonies, which have scarcely yet attained

attained the age of political maturity—impatient under the salutary restraint imposed upon eager passions by good laws and by time-tried institutions—were endeavouring, under the influence of young blood, to form a thoughtless connexion with Democracy—which every reflecting man must be aware would soon subject their properties as well as their lives to the misery and tyranny of mob-government—it would surely be the duty of the parent state, for *their* welfare rather than for its own, to admonish them with that inflexible firmness and with that unalterable kindness which in domestic life we all know are rarely exerted in vain. But there is something not only dreadful, but unnatural, in the reversion of the picture, which, however imperfectly we may have portrayed it, too clearly shows that it is the young country which is fighting to live under virtuous government, while the parent state, grown grey and wealthy under monarchical institutions, has become not only blind to the noble exertions of its offspring and deaf to its soul-stirring appeals, but is actually forcing it to ruin, by openly encouraging the very republican harlot whose proffered embraces the young victim repudiates and abhors!

How infamously have her Majesty's ministers behaved even to the Queen on the subject of the Canadas, and how unaccountable it is that their conduct in this instance should not have drawn down upon them the indignation of the imperial parliament!

On the 5th of February last, the Queen in her opening speech from the throne was advised by her ministers to say,

'I recommend the present state of these provinces (the Canadas) to your serious consideration; and I trust that your wisdom will adopt such measures as will secure to those parts of my empire the benefit of internal tranquillity.'

In direct opposition to the above recommendation, which the ministers had put into the mouth of the Queen, Lord Melbourne in one House, and Lord John Russell in the other, deem it advisable to turn round and say 'Pooh! pooh! I recommend you NOT to take the present state of the Canadas into your serious consideration; and I trust that during this session you will NOT adopt *any* such measures as will secure to those parts of the empire internal tranquillity.'

Again, three months after this, the same ministers advised their youthful and confiding Sovereign to send down to both houses of parliament the following message:—

'Her Majesty thinks proper to acquaint the House that it appears to her Majesty that the future welfare of her Majesty's subjects in Lower Canada *will be promoted* by an union of the said provinces into one province, for the purposes of legislation, from and after a period to be fixed by parliament, and her Majesty therefore recommends the House to consider such measures as may be submitted to them for
this

this purpose;—her Majesty being persuaded that the House will combine a due regard for peace and security in those provinces, with such provisions as shall be conducive to the permanent freedom and prosperity of her North American possessions.

In direct opposition—in the very teeth of the foregoing recommendation, which ministers had *themselves advised*, Lord Melbourne in one House, and Lord John Russell in the other, turn round and say ‘Pooh! pooh! I recommend the House NOT to consider such measures as may be submitted to them for an union of these two provinces. I recommend them to make *no* provision on the subject—in short, I repeat the advice I offered to the House in opposition to the recommendation contained in the Queen’s opening speech, namely, I advise you all to *do nothing at all*.’ ‘But how,’ it was asked in the House of Commons, ‘if you ministers have changed your minds, can the Queen’s message to us, recommending the union, be dealt with?’ ‘Pooh! pooh!’ replies Lord John Russell, ‘leave the thing unanswered!—take no notice of it!—never mind about precedents—never mind about treating the Crown with contempt: our sole object is to keep our places. for the maxim of a “liberal government” is, and ever shall be, “let those laugh who win!”’

The excuse offered by her Majesty’s ministers for suddenly abandoning the Queen’s solemn recommendation for an union of the Canadas was, that the House of Assembly of the Upper Province had *unexpectedly* disapproved of the measure. The fallacy of this subterfuge is, however, unanswerably proved by the following short despatch, which, a year ago, was laid before parliament, and which clearly shows, not only that both houses of the legislature of Upper Canada were deliberately averse to an union of the Canadas, but that the late King and the present ministers absolutely declined to recommend to parliament that fatal measure which a young unsuspecting Queen was afterwards induced to propose, and then left to abandon.

‘Downing-street, 21st April, 1837.

‘Sir,—I have the honour to acknowledge your despatch, No. 26, of the 4th ultimo, in which you transmit to me an address to his Majesty from the Legislative Council and House of Assembly of Upper Canada deprecating an union between the two provinces of Upper and Lower Canada. I beg leave to acquaint you, that, having laid this address before the King, his Majesty has been pleased to receive the same very graciously, and to command me to observe that the project of an union between the two provinces has not been contemplated by his Majesty as fit to be recommended for the sanction of parliament.

‘I have the honour, &c.

‘GLENELG.

‘Lieut.-Governor Sir F. Head, Bart.’

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It is almost impossible to record such gross misconduct without exclaiming—

‘ Age, thou art shamed ;

‘ Rome, thou hast lost the breed of noble bloods !’

The last act of the tragedy we have been detailing yet remains to be recorded. One would have thought that her Majesty's ministers, having successfully administered to our North American colonies the Durham poison, would have been contented with allowing it to effect its deadly object, and that with feigned affection they would even have pretended to succour the fainting victim of their guilt—but the immense importance to them of subverting British institutions in America has induced them, perfectly reckless of their characters, to annihilate by a last desperate blow the quivering existence of this noble portion of the British empire. ‘ While there is life there is hope ;’ and, though the Canadas had been mortally wounded, yet it was well known to the Queen's government that these provinces, even at the point of death, felt attachment to our institutions, and were still sensible of the commercial as well as political advantages which they would enjoy, could they but be spared to exist under our laws: it was necessary, therefore, that *both* these hopes should, like Captain Drew's professional prospects, be extinguished—and accordingly her Majesty's ministers determined on the close of the session to exchange Sir John Colborne, whom they had already found it necessary to remove from the government of Upper Canada, for a gentleman who was not only distinguished for his antipathy to the Canadian timber-trade, and for his attachment to Baltic interests, but who, to the astonishment and regret of every loyal inhabitant in the Canadas, had openly and unblushingly voted for *the ballot!!!*

This astounding appointment was no sooner known to the public, than the Colonial Association of British Merchants in London appealed to Lord Melbourne, and even addressed the Queen, most earnestly requesting that this unlooked-for calamity to the Canadas might be averted; but, though their language was complimented by the minister, their prayer was denied—the remonstrances of the Liverpool, Glasgow, and Birmingham merchants were also rejected—and, as if to prevent all further complaint, Mr. Boulett Thomson, whose delicate health had made it necessary for him to retire from the atmosphere of the House of Commons, was hastily despatched with his medicine-chest and instructions to a climate and to duties which every man knows require the fullest measure of both physical and moral strength. Now, when Nelson and Wellington were strenuously contending against the enemies of this country, if the ministry of the day had ventured not only to recall them, but

to supersede each of them in their commands by an officer who was notoriously a worshipper and would-be slave of Napoleon, how desperate would have been the remonstrances of our army and navy, how indignant would have been the exclamations of the British nation at such a treacherous sacrifice of the interests of the country!

Whatever may be the private virtues of Mr. Poulett Thomson, we beg leave to ask of what value will they be to the people of the Canadas, when they recollect the unceasing opposition he has offered to their trade?

When they reflect upon the immense influence which the political principles of their governor-general must unavoidably have upon the struggle which is taking place in their country between monarchical institutions and democracy, what encouragement have the British population to rally round their flag? And what have its republican enemies within the provinces, as well as without, to fear in attacking it, when they know that in the castle of St. Louis—in the British citadel of Quebec—there reigns a representative of their sovereign who, whatever may be his outward professions, is inwardly in his heart a *regicidal advocate of the ballot*?

Proud of our English liberty of speech, we can raise no objection to opinions, however inimical to British institutions, which any individual may deem it proper to assert in either house of parliament; but we do protest—and we feel confident that the nation and the civilised world will join us in solemnly protesting—against the selection of a gentleman who has voted for the ballot to be the representative of the British Sovereign in the Canadas; where, thanks to the treachery of her Majesty's ministers, an army of 17,000 men is at this moment under arms to repel the very republican measure of which Mr. Poulett Thomson, like his colleague our new Secretary at War, has been the open advocate.

But what are our provinces to think of the *other* changes that have simultaneously been effected? Mr. Labouchere and Lord Normanby have scarcely had time to learn the names of the five-and-thirty colonies over which they were called upon to preside, when the ministerial pack is dexterously shuffled, the nine of diamonds suddenly flies to the top—the Queen goes to the bottom—'Jack' is removed from the centre—the handsome King of the cards is slipped under Pope—and at the words '*Presto! hi! puss and begone!*' 'little Cass' is declared by the jugglers to have flown from the pack, and to be already on the ramparts at Quebec!

In a company of strolling players, Othello has scarcely time to wash

wash his face before he has to re-appear before the audience in the character of Diddler,—the Ghost, still coughing from the fumes of brimstone, with equal alacrity buckles on Falstaff's belly,—Pizarro turns into Harlequin,—and before a brief hour has elapsed, the jaded creature is seen with convex shins and dromedary back, starting from his sleepless pallet, to exclaim '*A horse! a horse! my kingdom for a horse!*'—But this ludicrous transmigration of souls is surely not suited to men who are presiding over the destinies of the British empire.

The mother country, as well as its colonies, are deeply sensible of the embarrassment to the public service which inevitably follows every sudden change in the ministers of state; and though liberal allowance for inexperience is always made when such changes are absolutely *necessary*, yet nothing can be more unsatisfactory to the nation, and more distressing to our colonies, than to witness a company of worthless ministers changing parts among each other, for no other reason than because the public, tired of their performances, from pit, gallery, and boxes, are vociferously exclaiming to them '*OFF! OFF! OFF!*'

Having concluded this imperfect examination of the disorder which throughout the late session of parliament has paralysed our colonial policy, we will now endeavour to extract from the melancholy evidence before us a plain useful moral.

If this gross misgovernment of our North American provinces were to end merely in the financial, political, and commercial loss to the empire of those most valuable possessions, with the painful reflection that by treachery and neglect we had driven a virtuous, industrious, and high-minded portion of our fellow-subjects from the shelter of British laws to democracy, it might perhaps be argued that, the penalty of our offence being inevitable, it is as unmanly as it is useless to stand now vainly lamenting over the past. 'If,' we have indeed heard it argued, 'the sun, which once could not set on our empire, is henceforwards never again to rise upon British territory in America, we have nevertheless daylight enough—and we had therefore better look before us and make the most of it, instead of allowing our minds in deep mourning to brood over dark reflections which may frighten, but which cannot assist us.' This reasoning, however, is fallacious: for the disease that has affected us in North America has proceeded not from the extremity, but from the *heart* of the empire; and, as the amputation of a limb is no cure for corruption engendered in the system by vicious habits, so we must alter our life, or, to drop the metaphor, change our policy, if we seriously desire to maintain the blessings which still remain with us.

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There can be no doubt that, not only in England, but throughout Europe, there have always existed two antagonist parties, one of which has been striving to secure property to all who have either inherited or industriously acquired it, while the other has been endeavouring to make the will of the majority stronger than the security of the law. Both of these parties have been liable to the accusation of having been actuated by self-interest, and, indeed, in both cases we believe the allegation to have been correct; but there is ~~this~~ important distinction, that, while the self-interested object of the one has been the encouragement of national honesty and industry, the self-interested object of the latter has been the nefarious profit attendant upon wholesale riot and plunder. Now, although, in England, men of education and talent have always been struggling to grasp the reins of government, yet the high character and unparalleled prosperity of the British empire must undeniably be attributed to the fact, that until lately the advocates for a revolution of property, like atheists, have been by common consent, both of Whigs and Tories, so disowned, repudiated, and despised, that their principles have been harmless, and, indeed, have, generally speaking, been very prudently concealed. But we need hardly observe to our readers that the government of the British empire has lately fallen into the hands of men who, availing themselves of the inexperience of a youthful Queen, have not only had the wickedness to conceive, but the reckless temerity to carry into effect, the policy of encouraging the levellers of law, rank, and property, and of publicly adopting their scheme.

When the enormous wealth of the British empire is compared with the condition of the many millions who in a crowded population must inevitably look to labour alone for their daily bread, it would be idle to lose a moment in speculating upon the mischievous effect likely to be produced upon the labouring and manufacturing classes in Great Britain and Ireland, on finding, to their astonishment, that the Queen's ministers were outlying avowed subverters of the monarchy in offering to them unhallowed concessions in return for the terrific assistance of the mob; but alas! the result is already before us! A 'National Convention' is *already* formed—pikes, pistols, and muskets, in considerable numbers, have *already* been amassed—printed treatises on street-firing, and on rural defences, ~~have already been distributed~~—the advantages of 'grappling with the national debt' have *already* been expounded—and the inhabitants of Birmingham, a city whose intelligence and industry in amassing wealth are the admiration of the world, have already, by the lurid flames of their own dwellings, read, during the midnight conflagration of their

their property, a frightful moral, which the remainder of their lives will probably not efface from their minds! And is not this revolution? 'Oh no,' her Majesty's ministers reply; 'the inscription on our new banner is "VICTORIA AND REFORM!"'

Now, we hope our readers, be they Whigs or Tories—be they secluded in the palace, or be they open observers of the public mind—will shudder when we inform them, that upon the large red bunting flag, now in England, which was captured from the rebel M'Kenzie on the very day on which he actually set fire to the east end of Toronto, with the object, during the confusion, of plundering the banks, there is inscribed, in long white letters, the identical motto of her Majesty's ministers, namely, 'VICTORIA AND REFORM!!!' and yet, M'Kenzie, execrated by the people whose 'grievances' he had pretended to redress—outlawed as a traitor by the institutions he had undertaken to 'reform,' is, by the sentence even of a republican judge, now lying in gaol in the State of New York; while the real promoters of his rebellion—the real inventors of the flag, which, under the name of a youthful Queen, concealed the dagger and the torch—the real authors of the 'National Convention,' and the real encouragers of the Chartists—are at this moment revelling under their new banner in the palace of their Sovereign, as thoughtlessly as if there was no such thing in existence as the awakened indignation of a powerful nation—no such punishment as the general execration of mankind—and no such thing above us all as an Omnipotent power, which sooner or later demonstrates that, even on earth, there can be no resting-place for the wicked!

The danger, however, is imminent, and it is useless to conceal that, unless the friends of good government, the protectors of life and property, without delay act upon fixed principle rather than on their late fluctuating policy, we shall inevitably be ruined beyond human relief.

If the administration of the government of the British empire continued to be conducted as it hitherto has been, on the maxim, or rather truism, that ministers should, with becoming dignity, retire from their posts whenever it becomes apparent that they have lost the confidence of the country, it would follow that, according to the old-fashioned strategy, the opposition ought, under the direction of their leaders, to act together in a firm phalanx, in order to drive the government into a minority, and thus dislodge them from their posts. But this honourable maxim is no longer the rule of our warfare, for the country is but too well aware that it is by unconstitutional, instead of by constitutional support, that the present ministers have determined to stand, and that, accordingly, whenever they are opposed by the House of Commons, they
make

make up their loss by appealing to O'Connell and the Chartists, just as, when resisted by the House of Lords, they infamously determine by a batch of new peers to endeavour to obtain an ascendancy—in short, their plan is to recruit, by a fresh conscription of physical strength, whatever they lose before the country in moral power; or, in still plainer words, to vie with the Chartists in the diabolical principle of letting loose upon a refractory parliament, upon uncompromising laws, and upon honest and industrious landowners and merchants, the unbridled passions of the multitude.

The effect, therefore, to the Conservatives, of obtaining a constitutional victory in either house, is to a certain degree frustrated; and under this unnatural calamity, we must declare, it appears to us that, regardless of majorities, minorities, or of the violent passions which her Majesty's ministers so artfully excite, we ought, by straightforward conduct and fearless language, steadily and unceasingly to appeal to the good sense, to the sober judgment, of the British nation.

Although the leaders of the Conservatives, during the last session, might have felt that THEY could not attempt to resist by a majority the various measures we have detailed, besides innumerable others to which we have not alluded, yet if, apparently regardless of parliamentary defeat, every friend to British institutions had manfully and independently expressed the opinions which we know they inwardly entertained respecting, for instance, the insulting presentation by ministers, to parliament, of Lord Durham's Report—the unfounded allegations it contained—the insults we had suffered from the Americans—the affecting appeal made to us by the Governor-General, Lieutenant-Governors, and legislatures of our colonies—the neglect of Captain Drew, &c. &c., there can be no doubt that, whatever might have been the parliamentary result, the sound feelings and good sense of the country would have been awakened—the indignation of the community would have been excited—and the light of truth would thus gradually have been concentrated in a focus upon her Majesty's ministers, until it would eventually have consumed them.

If the government, firmly standing within the fortress of their policy, would, according to old English customs, receive the open assault of their antagonists with a gallant determination to conquer them or die, it would in that case be prudent for the opposition to act under discipline, and not to fritter away ammunition and men which could only be advantageously expended by regulated volleys and a well-organised approach; but, under their unprincipled system, whenever they are beaten, they retire, not from their offices, but from the institutions it was their duty to defend.

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Their parliamentary defeat produces, therefore, nothing but a fresh abandonment of the monarchy: in fact, with the objects they have in view, they are but too happy to be driven to ally themselves with notorious agitators, and with well-known leaders of the Chartists.

We repeat, therefore, our opinion, that during the late session the discipline of the Conservatives has been too closely maintained; they waited for orders which it was not deemed prudent to promulgate, and thus, instead of firing their muskets independently whenever they got a glimpse of their irregular enemies, they patiently and in mute silence stood before them to the very end of the session with 'ordered arms.'

'The Earl of Chatham, with his sword drawn,
 Stood waiting for Sir Richard Strachan.
 Sir Richard, longing to be at 'em,
 Stood waiting for the Earl of Chatham!'

The result, not only to our colonies, but to every department of the State, has become apparent to us all, and it certainly is lamentable to reflect that her Majesty's ministers, who acknowledge that they dread a dissolution of parliament, and who, whether they acknowledge it or not, are notoriously opposed by the Army, by the Navy, by the Church, by the Peers, by the landed interest, by our merchants, and, generally speaking, by 'a bold yeomanry, their country's pride,' should nevertheless be permitted almost with impunity to influence the destinies and to undermine the constitution of an empire which the civilized world had been accustomed to regard with admiration and respect.

We have reason to believe, indeed, we may say, practically to know, that in no portion of the globe is our policy more deeply regretted than by men of property in both continents of republican America.

The liberty of the press, and the freedom of speech—the enormous wealth, with the unrestrained power of spending or bequeathing it as its owners may desire—the protection of life and property, and the virtuous submission to the law, which characterise our empire, are facts which unanswerably proclaim the inestimable value of its time-tried institutions. In the countries to which we have alluded, it is, of course, too much to expect that these facts should be publicly referred to, but among men of property in America, who have been severely suffering under the tyrannical domination of the multitude, there are many who have not only been long living in silent hopes that the moral of our prosperity would eventually be triumphant, but who do not hesitate to declare to any respectable Englishman that British institutions, like truth, must eventually prevail; but when all of a sudden

they see the ministers of the British Crown not only insensible to the blessings which surround them, but actually attempting to destroy them, their own case becomes hopeless, and their minds are filled with astonishment and despair.

The conduct of the Queen's government is an infatuation which those Americans we have alluded to are totally unable to comprehend. They justly say—'How can we possibly, even ever so indirectly, argue in praise of your institutions, when we see that, like spoiled children tired of their toy, you are openly trying to destroy them; and, again—'How can we possibly dare to argue in our senate against the disgraceful aggressions which we are aware our citizens have committed upon your territory, when it appears that, deeply as we feel them, your government and your parliament set us no example, and lend us no assistance in the complaint?'

Similar arguments and similar observations are daily made against us in India, and indeed in every quarter of the globe. By all civilised nations the British constitution is looked upon with reverence and esteem; and yet, to the astonishment of mankind, the ministers of her Britannic Majesty are observed openly and sedulously at work during seven days in every week in levelling it to the dust, *the parliament and the nation standing silent spectators of the scene!*

The British nation hate treachery—hate hypocrisy—hate men who can bow before a throne they are secretly undermining, who can beckon to their foes, and who can turn their backs upon their friends—hate men who, lest the enemies of the empire should be offended, are afraid to reward officers that have shed their blood in its defence—hate men who can deliberately recommend a young Queen to lay before parliament allegations which they know to be libellous—and, above all, the British people hate men who, when they have sunk fairly overwhelmed by public opinion, can 'like drowned bodies rise when they have rotted,' re-appearing to public view to be floated from quarter-day to quarter-day, not by the buoyancy of their own characters, but by the political inflation of their women's petticoats—who, when 'they fight, run away, that they may live to fight another day,' and who, when boldly bearded by their political antagonists, not only for eight-and-forty hours prudently retire from their reach, but, during this interval, cunningly thrust forwards to meet the rude attack—THE SMOOTH CHINS OF THEIR LADIES!

With such a ministry to contend against, all that appears necessary is, that the Conservatives, and those of other parties who equally despise them, should steadily persevere in 'showing them up,' in 'stirring them up,' in 'cutting them up,' in 'sewing them up,'

up,' in 'screwing them up,' in 'rooting them up,' and, as they won't sink downwards, in 'blowing them up,' until the nation, disgusted with their unmasculine characters and performances, indignantly hisses this epicene company from the stage.

In the pursuance of this plain old-English system it must be surely self-evident, that for no mysterious reason whatever should the leaders of the Conservatives ever confound the country, by being seen supporting their antagonists, in order to prevent them from being completely beaten !

There may be, we are aware, a certain hidden danger, which by a sudden antic of this nature may, for a short period, be dexterously averted ; but, estimating this advantage at whatever it may be worth, it can in no degree compensate for the irreparable loss which the Conservative cause sustains by it. The human countenance has not been made to frown and smile at the same time ; and, although nothing is nobler than mercy to an enemy, yet never should it be extended to *him until he has surrendered.*

' *Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos !* '

The British people, perhaps, better than any other nation on earth, can clearly appreciate a stand-up fight between honest and dishonest principles ; but in the middle of the struggle they can allow no sudden exchange of colours—no interchange between the parties but hard fair blows. Now, the main charge against her Majesty's ministers is, that for the sake of holding *their* offices, that is to say, *for value received*, they have wickedly agreed together to ruin the empire ; and that accordingly, as a bribe to the multitude for their support, they are traitorously opening to them the gates of the fortress which contains the nation's public and private wealth. If, therefore, for the sake of averting a difficulty, or to obtain any other equivalent, the Conservatives are seen *also* to agree to do what is wrong, or what is tantamount to it, openly to support those who they *know* are doing wrong, they at once place themselves in the very predicament of their antagonists : they lose their caste—they sully their character—they puzzle the country ; and, after all, the peace they purchase being but momentary, the danger they have avoided remains at last to be encountered.

If our difficulties by being hidden, could be annihilated, it would then no doubt be proper for us to adopt the policy of the ostrich, who hides his small head whenever he thinks that his large body and long shanks are in danger ; but as our political dangers, cloaked as they may be, must still exist, there surely ought to be no doubt that the sooner they are boldly met the better. The sunken rock is always more dreaded than

that which protrudes from the waters; and, as there should be no undecipherable hieroglyphics on the political chart that governs our course, the sooner the British nation knows what it really has to fear the more readily will it be disposed to obey the Conservative helmsman. In spite of her Majesty's ministers, and in spite of Chartists, a noble feeling pervades the country: all that is necessary is, without fear, guile, or artifice, steadily to bring it into action; and, far from shrinking from whatever we may have to contend against, there is nothing, we feel confident, that would sooner rouse the English lion from his slumber, and make him shake the dew-drops from his tawny mane, than the very appearance of real danger.

The British nation has nothing to fear from open attack from whatever quarter it may advance. The constitution contains within itself a remedy for every disorder that can assail it: but the most impregnable fortress may be taken by treachery, or lost by neglect; and as her Majesty's ministers are notoriously betraying *their* trust, others should not forget that in time of war the soldier sleeping at his post is liable to the same punishment as he who has been found guilty of having joined the ranks of the enemy.

The people of England are, we know, not only ready, but *anxious*, to rally round the British standard, if they could but see it, even by an individual, fearlessly unfurled and firmly planted; and we are quite certain that, if our Conservatives, instead of cautiously feeling their way step by step, doubtful about attacking, and doubtful about defending, anything at all likely to involve them in parliamentary defeat, would in the sacred cause of truth and justice actually *seek* to place themselves in difficulty and in danger, in order that the British people might clearly see what is really the case—namely, that nothing but *their* assistance can save the country—the appeal would be enthusiastically responded to; and the intelligence, wealth, and property of the country would, *en masse*, rise in its defence.

On the other hand, every timid concession to vicious principles demoralises, debases, and hardens the public mind, until it ceases to shudder at the expression of sentiments, or at the pursuance of policy, which it would once virtuously have abhorred; and, in one word—if the country be allowed ~~much longer~~ to become familiarised with the unrebuked sentiments and conduct of unpunished ministers, the loss of our noble North American colonies will accelerate—not retard—the destruction of the remaining portion of the empire.

- ART. IX.—1. *Post-office Reform: its Importance and Practicability.* By Rowland Hill. London. 1837. pp. 104.
 2. *Du Service des Postes et de la Taxation des Lettres au moyen d'un timbre.* Par M. A. Piron, Sous-Directeur des Postes. Paris. 1838. pp. 148.
 3. *First, Second, and Third Reports from the Select Committee on Postage.* 3 vols. fol. 1838.

POST-OFFICE Reform, as it is called, has excited of late a great deal of interest, though but very little attention. No question has been more talked and less thought about. It has never been publicly discussed, nor even so much as fairly stated; and the sudden vote of the House of Commons on the 12th of July last seems to us one of the most inconsiderate jumps in the dark ever made by that very inconsiderate assembly, whose natural proneness to every change, and particularly to any which promises a reduction of taxation, was (in this instance, as in so many others) instigated and enforced by that curious combination of alternate errors—weakness and rashness, delay and hurry, obstinacy and inconsistency, which distinguish—from any other that ever existed—Lord Melbourne's enigmatical administration.

But the question is too important, not merely as to its financial results, but in its possible effects on our social system and the statistical and moral interests of mankind, to be allowed to pass without further examination. on such slight and *ex parte* authorities as Mr. Rowland Hill's pamphlet, the partial, yet inconsistent report of the Committee of the House of Commons, and the vague and contradictory speech of the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, adopting a proposition which he evidently disapproved, and refusing to provide any specific guard against a danger which he foresaw and admitted.

We therefore think it a duty to lay before our readers a history of this very singular affair, its origin, its principle, its details, and its promised, and, as we conceive them, its probable results.

The management of the Post-office had been for a series of years a subject of general approbation. It was always said to be the best conducted department in the state; and though this praise was in truth somewhat indiscriminate and excessive, yet undoubtedly the celerity, the certainty, the security, with which so vast a machine executed, with so few mistakes, such an infinite complexity of details, were admirable. The merits of the Post-office administration would, however, not have been so long and so generally acknowledged but for the fortunate provision of the law, which excluded all its efficient officers from the House of Commons, and even from voting at elections. This,

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in a great measure, released the department from the cavils and criticisms of *party*; and Sir Francis Freeling was as acceptable to Mr. Fox as to Mr. Pitt, to Lord Grey as to the Duke of Wellington. At length, however, it began to be suspected that the administration of that excellent public servant had, perhaps, lasted too long. Sir Francis had been himself, in early life, a post-office reformer, and to his last hour professed to be, and we are satisfied was, sincerely desirous of continuing the system of improvement and advance on which his early reputation was founded; but as improvements proceeded, there would be every day less room to improve, and the hourly increasing completion of duties and interests rendered every change of more doubtful expediency, and of more uncertain result. There is no branch of the public service in which alterations, apparently slight, may produce such extensive derangement; but the great impediment to changes in the post-office did not arise within the department itself, but from the Treasury. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was naturally averse to any risk of such an important revenue; and there is no doubt that, under this apprehension, the ~~rates~~ ^{rates} were kept too high, and some inconvenient delays and anomalies were suffered to exist; but that these considerations produced or protracted any culpable neglect or serious abuse, we think we may confidently deny—and inquire what serious grievances have been remedied, or what substantial improvements have been made, since the men and doctrines of the new school succeeded to Sir Francis Freeling?

We, at least, in a pretty extensive correspondence, find none; and, on the contrary, more mistakes and delays have fallen under our personal knowledge in the three years since Sir Francis's death, than had occurred in ten years of our previous experience. Not that we blame the new administration for these accidents. We believe their increase is mainly attributable to an over-anxiety to attempt improvements which could not, even under the most cautious guidance, be effected without some temporary derangements, and of course still less in the utterly inexperienced hands of Lieutenant-Colonel Maberly, who was so strangely selected to succeed Sir Francis Freeling in this very peculiar and technical department.

But even Lieutenant-Colonel Maberly's ^{good} ~~good~~ intentions, when he had acquired experience enough to form any, ~~were~~ ^{were} defeated by the mingled negligence and rashness of the ministry. One instance is too remarkable to be passed over. Postage, as all our readers know, is now paid by distance; not, however, as one would have thought, the distance of the place where the letter is posted to the place where it is delivered, but the distance through

through which the post-office may, for its own convenience, cause the letter to pass; so that the letters addressed in a town thirty miles from London on one road to another only five miles distant on a parallel road, would be sent up to London and down again, and, in addition to the vexatious delay, would be charged with sixty miles of postage instead of five. This grievance Colonel Maberly proposed to the late Chancellor of the Exchequer to remedy, at the calculated risk to the revenue of 80,000*l.* This proposition Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer rejected. He could not spare so much revenue:—but a year or two after, in the last dying moments of his own official life, he on the sudden, and in the most irrational hurry, abandoned—not 80,000*l.*, but 1,600,000*l.*—the whole post-office revenue—to the perilous chances of Mr. Rowland Hill's plan, and against the advice of his own selected officers, the postmaster-general, the secretary, and all the officers of the department.

It is one of the characteristics of the reformed parliament—(and indeed it was foreseen as one of the consequences of such a reform as was inflicted upon us)—not only that the House of Commons are prone to usurp into their own hands the executive administration of affairs, but that individual members are led to seek distinction, to acquire importance, or even to gratify a personal taste, by appropriating to themselves some special business—

‘Within whose circle none dare walk but they!’

It is not our business to inquire with what motive, or by what accident, Mr. Wallace, the member for Greenock, was induced to take the Post-Office in hand. We find him, soon after his appearance, and ever since, making from time to time motions for papers and returns from the Post-office, for which, as far as we can discover, there was no rational ground, and from which we know not that any good has been, or could be, produced. They seemed to us to have been, for the most part, of that kind of random motion with which a member *fishes* for *abuses*, but is still more anxious to *catch notoriety*.

We must here observe on a very serious inconvenience which the *insouciance*, and still more the desperate weakness of the ministry, has of late years produced in parliamentary practice. In the good times of the constitution, the minister never consented to the production of any public documents, unless *prima facie* grounds were expressly stated to justify the proposed inquiry. Without some special motive, it was justly considered that the House of Commons ought not to interfere with the executive government. This was a wise and wholesome regulation, and, though it may at first sight seem paradoxical to say so, produced more publicity, discussion, and inquiry, than the present

present system of allowing any individual member, often without notice, and generally without comment on either side, to move for any papers he may have a curiosity to see.

In Mr. Wallace's case, for example, if he had been obliged to state each alleged abuse to which his motions pointed, and if, as was their duty, the Chancellor of the Exchequer or the Secretary of the Treasury had inquired into the facts, and come down prepared either to remedy the grievance, if true—or to defend and vindicate the department, if unjustly arraigned—Mr. Wallace would not have been suffered to have gone on for six or seven years hammering away about post-office abuses until, by the unchecked accumulation of motions and papers, the House and the public were deluded into an impression that the government could not have sanctioned such a waste of official labour and public time, unless there were really 'something rotten in the state of' St. Martin's-le-Grand. If the matters had been sifted in debate, the truth must have been elicited.

But the parliamentary apathy of the ministers was even worse than it at first sight appears; for while all this was going on, there was sitting a commission of general inquiry into the Post-Office, composed of three members of the government, Lord Duncannon, Mr. Labouchere, and Lord Seymour, whose *official* labours—which seem to have been diligent and useful—should have rendered Mr. Wallace's *officious* interference worse than superfluous. But with so narrow and precarious a majority in the House of Commons, the ministry cannot venture to incur the risk of offending any one of their supporters, and having, moreover, adopted for their own use a perversion of Lord Nelson's celebrated signal—by 'expecting every man to do *their* duty'—Mr. Wallace was allowed to continue without interruption what looked very like a course of probation for the place of *Commissioner* of the Post-office in the new *Board*—for the creation of which a bill passed (more than once, we believe) the House of Commons, but which was rejected by the House of Lords, chiefly by the testimony and authority of the Duke of Richmond, the active and intelligent postmaster-general of Lord Grey's ministry.

But while Mr. Wallace was thus tinkering away, there suddenly arose a very different kind of post-office reformer, who threw Mr. Wallace and all other petty grievance-mongers into the shade, and who, without making any complaint of the former management, opened new views and new principles on the general system of post-office communication, which have given to that subject, not only in England, but all over Europe, an entirely different aspect, and may be productive of very important results, be they good or evil.

Early in 1837, Mr. Rowland Hill—originally, we understand, a schoolmaster, and afterwards secretary to the South Australian Commission—observing that the post-office revenue had remained stationary while the population and all other measures of public prosperity had greatly increased, and attributing this fact, as had been already done by some competent authorities, to the excessive rate of the postage; observing also that the charges of management bore what he thought a very great and excessive proportion to the gross revenue—and finding, according to his calculation, that the actual cost of the conveyance of letters was infinitely small as compared with the rates of postage—Mr. Hill, we say, imagined a scheme for sweeping away the whole of the financial and account branches of the Post-office, and reducing its duties to the mere *mechanical* functions of receiving, conveying, and delivering letters, of which the postage should be collected by anticipation, at the Stamp-office, by means of a stamp to be affixed to the letter, and which, at the *uniform* rate of *one penny*, was to convey it, free of any other charge, to *every part of the empire*—and all this, as he promised, without any permanent loss, nay, with a probable future advantage to the revenue.

The apparent justness, in point of fact, of most of the preliminary considerations on which the scheme was founded—its obvious simplicity—its alleged economy—its practical convenience, and above all, we believe, its bold novelty, tended to create an immediate and considerable sensation in its favour; and we confess that *we ourselves* were dazzled by the brilliancy of a theory supported, as at first sight it seems to be, by a sober and candid statement of financial and statistical details. But, after the first moments of surprise, when we came to examine these details more carefully, to consider whether the facts did really justify Mr. Hill's conclusions as to the present management of the department, and his predictions as to the future results, we found, or fancy that we found, that both his inferences and his expectations involved a great deal of gratuitous assumption—that many of the facts seem to lead to exactly opposite conclusions—and that this brilliant theory was after all but a *theory*, on which, in the present state of our information, and without much more consideration, and some kind of *experimental test*, it would be highly imprudent to risk such vast and vital interests as might be seriously impaired if the abolition of the old system were to be followed by the failure of the new speculation.

The inquiry that did take place in the course of last year, by a Committee of the House of Commons, was in our opinion very unsatisfactory—we might almost say illusory. That Committee was moved for, and, we suppose, selected, by Mr. Wallace. It

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was entirely composed of gentlemen belonging to what—though some of them were members of the government—may be called the *Movement** party—with only two exceptions—Sir Thomas Freemantle, who seems to have seldom attended and never voted, and Lord Lowther, who, Conservative as he is on all other points, happened also to be a post-office reformer,—a moderate, cautious, and conscientious one, but still having so strong a predisposition to change the system of the post-office, that he was assuredly no exception to the general complexion of Mr. Wallace's Committee.

The reference of the House to this Committee was in these words:—

'Ordered, That a select Committee [*select with a vengeance*] be appointed to inquire into the present rates and mode of charging postage, with a view to such reduction thereof *as may be made without injury to the revenue*; and for this purpose to examine especially into the mode recommended for charging and collecting postage, *in a pamphlet published by Mr. Rowland Hill.*'—Vote, 23rd Nov., 1837.

In old times we might have felt some surprise at this parliamentary notice of a pamphlet, and still more at such a devolution upon a Committee of the House of Commons of the obvious duties of the Chancellor of the Exchequer—but we are habituated to much less excusable evasions of ministerial responsibility. Mr. Rowland Hill's plan was certainly worthy of parliamentary consideration, and we only complain that the tribunal was so very *select*.

Mr. Hill's scheme was not only thus dignified by parliamentary notice, but it also acquired a still more powerful, though somewhat concealed auxiliary in a combination of some extensive merchants and bankers in the City of London, who, as we learn, formed a Committee, and subscribed and expended a very large sum, and were prepared with a still larger if necessary, to organize (as has been the most approved mode of carrying political objects ever since we have had a mock government) an *agitation* in favour of Mr. Hill's plan.

This agitation produced that enormous number of petitions which loaded the table of the House of Commons during the two last sessions, and which has been so triumphantly displayed—no doubt at the expense of the City Committee—in some of the public papers; but which, as in the case of all petitions thus got up, really expressed little more than the wishes of the directing Committee. We readily admit that there is *not* a man in the empire who would not, as an abstract proposition, prefer paying a penny rather than sixpence for a letter; but, assuming that a mil-

* For instance—they^{all}, we believe (but Lord Seymour, a Lord of the Treasury) have voted for the *Ballot*!

lion and a half must be somehow raised for the public service, we very much doubt whether the City Committee could, with all their zeal, have got ten individuals to agree in a petition for transferring that charge from postage to any other *specific* object of taxation: they therefore very prudently, though not very candidly, kept altogether out of sight the possible defalcation in the revenue, or, when the point was at all alluded to, insisted that there would be increase rather than diminution.

But it will be said, and with great *prima facie* justice, that the very combination of these eminent, intelligent, and experienced merchants, is of itself the strongest evidence in favour of the plan. We fully admit it, and should readily accept the evidence of Baring, Brothers, and Co., or of Messrs. Glynn and Co., as worth more, single-handed, than thousands of such petitions as we allude to—if that evidence were wholly unbiassed by individual considerations; but when we are told that some of the houses who were most active for this post-office reform, now pay such (to us almost incredible) sums as 6000*l.*, 8000*l.*, 10,000*l.*, and even 11,000*l.* a-year in postages, we cannot receive their testimony in favour of a uniform penny rate as altogether disinterested. It is true that these great houses, like smaller traders, are very certain to recover their postages from their customers, and with interest too, in one shape or another. In some businesses the postage is *specifically* charged against the correspondent, and the proposed change would therefore no otherwise affect *them* than by relieving them from so serious an *advance*, and by the general impulse which might be given to trade; but there is another class to which we are informed that the most zealous members of the agitating committee and many of the most decided witnesses belonged:—namely, those with whom it is not usual to make *direct* charges against their correspondents for postage, and for whom, of course, the reduction of the taxation would be nearly, if not altogether, so much *clear gain*. Every one who has paid even the slightest attention to the practical operations of finance knows that, in the long run, all taxation falls on the consumer, and that, on the other hand, the greater share of any sudden reduction falls, in the first instance, into the pocket of the dealer. So, if we are rightly informed that a firm, one of the most active promoters of the penny rate, pays 11,000*l.* per annum in postage, and repays *itself* by its general profits, it is clear that the adoption of Mr. Hill's plan would put something like 10,000*l.* per annum clear into *their pockets*; and to make up for that defalcation in the Post-office revenue, the people of England must be taxed to exactly the amount that shall be conveyed by this reform into the private purses of Messrs. *This* or *That*.

Far be it from us to insinuate—what we really do not suspect—that the respectable gentlemen of the agitation committee were actuated by narrow and merely selfish motives:—they saw clearly that a great and immediate advantage would accrue in their own concerns, and they may reasonably have inferred that similar advantages would be felt by others, as well by the direct saving of the out-goings on postages as by the general extension of correspondence:—all we mean to say is, that neither their individual authority, nor the evidence which they so carefully prepared and so cleverly produced before the Committee of the House of Commons, can have the weight which belongs to a disinterested testimony; and we think that the great and immediate profit to themselves has intercepted or obscured the views that they might otherwise have taken of the serious difficulties and disadvantages to which many other individual as well as public interests may be subjected.

We have read the whole of that voluminous evidence with great care, and certainly without prejudice—for our first impressions were in favour of Mr. Hill's plan, and we still are most zealous friends, on the same general principles as Mr. Hill, to the greatest possible reduction of the postages which the state of the revenue and of the country would permit—but we are bound to say, after the perusal of the evidence and a mature consideration of all the arguments of Mr. Hill and his advocates, that, whatever may be thought of the *abstract* advantages of a general penny-postage, *Mr. Hill's specific plan* has broken down on almost every point, both as to the facts on which it professes to stand, and on the results which it promises. The plan may be good, and Mr. Rowland Hill may be eventually a public benefactor, but certainly not for the reasons stated either by himself or his partisans, as we shall now endeavour to show.

In the very outset, the first, most prominent, and most important ground and basis of Mr. Hill's proposition has already failed, and worse than failed, for it operates against him. The *first* paragraph of his pamphlet is as follows:—

'The last quarterly accounts [the date of writing is January, 1837] show that the present revenue of the country *greatly exceeds* the expenditure; there is therefore reason to hope that a reduction of taxation may shortly take place.'—*Post-office Reform*, p. 1,

And he proceeds in a very summary way to ~~decide~~ that any such reduction of taxation would be most beneficially directed to postage. Now we admit that, *if* a great reduction of taxation were, to be made, a considerable proportion of it ought to be allotted to the postages, which are in many cases too high, and in many more clogged with vexatious anomalies, such as that we
before

before noticed, of the charging by the circuitous instead of the direct distance, and several others. These are matters which in any state of the general revenue might, and should, be remedied; and would, we confidently believe, have been so if Sir Robert Peel's government had lasted, and Lord Ashburton and Lord Lowther remained at the Board of Trade. It is rather a curious circumstance that the two persons on whose experience and judgment the Whigs lay the most stress in this great commercial question are the very two whom they ousted in 1835 from the Board of Trade, to be replaced by Mr. Poulett Thomson and Mr. Shiel!

We entirely concur in the fair and legitimate meaning of an axiom which the penny-post reformers have, we think, grossly perverted, namely, that the *revenue* derived from the Post-office is a *secondary* consideration—the public convenience and general facility of intercourse being the *first*. This axiom, advanced most prominently by Lord Lowther, who has taken, both in and out of office, an active interest in Post-office reform—has been much relied on by the advocates for a universal penny-post; but we shall show hereafter that they push Lord Lowther's authority a great deal further than, either in his Lordship's meaning or in sound argument, it ought to go, and that it has been, as we have just said, perverted to what we think a very dangerous conclusion.

No one can rate higher than we do the paramount advantages of a cheap, rapid, and certain post-communication, to the commercial, intellectual, and social interests of mankind. *That*, we repeat, is the first object—the consideration of revenue is subordinate—very important, no doubt, but subordinate. If, therefore, Mr. Hill's fundamental statement were true—if there were an excess of income to be disposed of—we are not prepared to say that it could be more beneficially applied than in the *allocation* of postages.

But what turns out to be the fact?—there is no '*great excess*' of income—there is no excess at all; on the contrary, a great and growing *deficit*—which threatens, even without any help from Post-office reform, to disarrange our whole financial system—to endanger the security of the public creditor—and, need we add, exposes us to all the risk of the worst species of anarchy. This deficit began the very year (1837) in which Mr. Hill speculated on a surplus: by the close of that year the deficit was no less than 655,760*l.*: upon which, in the next edition of his pamphlet, (1838,) Mr. Hill quietly observes, '*that the depression of the revenue is, there can be little doubt, temporary*;' and with this comfortable confidence he persists in arguing on the imaginary surplus.

surplus. But at the close of 1838, the deficit was further increased by a sum of 345,227*l.*; and now, Mr. Rice has gone out of office bequeathing to his successor an estimate for the year 1839 of a further deficit of 860,000*l.*—being an accumulated defalcation of 1,860,987*l.*

Here, then, was an argument founded on Mr. Hill's own preliminary admission, by which a wise and honest government ought to have resisted with its whole power an experiment which risked no less of annual revenue than 1,600,000*l.*—which was the net produce of the Post-office for the last year.

But the government is neither wise nor honest—in fact, they are not even a government—their situation is so precarious and *squeezeable*—to use the happy vulgarism of one of the *squeezers*—that they are at the mercy of any two or three of their supporters; and the radical section of their narrow majority having, for motives sufficiently obvious, insisted on the concession of the penny-postage, the ministers submitted—with, however, to do them all justice, as much reluctance and as bad a grace as if they were doing some constitutional and meritorious act.

But although this preliminary objection is one which ought to have been decisive with the government against making so perilous an experiment *at such a crisis*. we do not rest this question on grounds so narrow as the temporary pressure of financial difficulties. If no such difficulty had supervened, we still think, and we expect to be able to show, that Mr. Hill's project is in itself very problematical—*by the means and for the purposes* which he proposes, and that the report of the Committee which pushes Mr. Hill's *principle* still farther than he *at first* pretended to do is still more objectionable.

After Mr. Hill's preliminary postulate of an *excess of revenue*, (which so unfortunately for him and for us has failed him,) he proceeds to lay more general and more solid grounds for his proposition, by showing that the Post-office revenue is not so great as it ought to be—that this is attributable *solely* to the excessive rates of postage, and that a diminution of these rates, after perhaps a slight temporary depression, would tend, according to all analogy, to an ultimate and progressive increase in the revenue.

We have already stated our long-formed opinion that the rates are in some cases too high, and the practical service in many instances imperfect and anomalous; and that these defects ought even at some sacrifice of revenue, to be immediately amended,—and we believe that *such* improvements would probably soon repay the loss—but Mr. Hill pushes this principle to an extent in which we cannot concur.

He begins by stating the very startling fact, that since the year

1815—during twenty-four years of unexampled internal progress in population and general prosperity—the post-office revenue has rather diminished than increased: this he illustrates by the following table:—

Year	Population.	Net revenue actually obtained.	Revenue which would have been obtained had the receipts kept pace with the increase of population from 1815.	Comparative loss.
		£	£	£
1815	19,552,000	1,557,291	1,557,291
1820	20,928,000	1,479,547	1,674,000	194,453
1825	22,362,000	1,670,219	1,789,000	118,781
1830	23,961,000	1,517,952	1,917,000	399,048
1835	25,605,000	1,540,300	2,048,000	507,700

In addition to this he shows, by a similar table, that, compared with what he considers the strictly analogous case of the stage-coach duty, the loss on the Post-office is still greater, for as this revenue has increased from 217,000*l.* to 498,000*l.*, the Post-office would, in the same proportion, have reached 3,550,000*l.*, which implies, he says, a positive loss of upwards of *two millions*; and then he quotes the opinions of Sir Henry Parnell and Mr. M'Culloch, that this stand-still can only be accounted for by the excessive rates of postage. The fact is striking—and the high rate of tax has probably been a considerable, though we cannot think the only, cause of this remarkable result—so remarkable indeed as to appear to us unaccountable, even on Mr. Hill's hypothesis: for we certainly do not live in an age in which either business or pleasure is much impeded, even among the lower orders, by considerations of petty economy—under which the denying oneself a useful or agreeable letter might be classed; but there are some circumstances which alleviate, if they do not altogether remove our surprise, and which, it is at least right to suggest in explanation of what, on Mr. Hill's statement, would appear an inexplicable phenomenon.

In the first place, we wonder that it did not strike so sharp an accountant as Mr. Hill, that when his two calculations gave such very different results, one of them must be erroneous. One of his tables shows a loss of 500,000*l.*, the other a loss of *four times* that sum: it is therefore clear that one or the other must be a fallacious criterion; and we believe that both are attempts to measure things which are not commensurable. In the next place, Mr. Hill takes as his standard that remarkable and glorious year 1815, which, from the overthrow of Buonaparte and the astonishing events which immediately preceded and followed it, created a universal stir and excitement, and gave a general movement to every

every kind of affairs, unparalleled in the annals of the world : whereas if he had taken the account, as in *fairness to the argument* he ought, from the period at which the *largest increase* of the tax was made, viz., 1801, he must have shown that the net post-office revenue of the United Kingdom had just *doubled* ; the sums being—

1801 . . .	£ 772,675
1835 . . .	£1,540,300

while the population was, according to the census nearest the two periods—

1801 . . .	16,338,102 persons.
1831 . . .	24,271,763.

So that the post-office revenue had nearly doubled, while the population had increased by not quite one-half. This, which completely overthrows Mr. Hill's statements, seems even to justify an opposite conclusion, namely, that the post-office revenue may occasionally appear stationary, or even retrograde, by happening at periods of peculiar excitement to have outrun the natural average of its duties.

But, in addition to this positive refutation of Mr. Hill's tables, we have some general considerations to urge why, independently of the rates of duties, the post-office revenue has not arisen to a greater amount. First, the gratuitous conveyance of forty-four millions of newspapers, the estimated number now conveyed, of which the letters are made to pay the expense ; and moreover, who can compute how many *letters* of news, of announcements of births, deaths, and marriages, or of mere business, may not have been retrenched by this enormous circulation of *printed* intelligence. Again ; it seems natural that, as population thickens, the average distance, and of course the average produce of correspondence, will diminish. Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield, Leeds, &c., are become so many minor Londons, which communicate with their own vicinities, at the lower rates of postage, and instead of one heavy letter to London costing a shilling or one shilling and sixpence, two or three fourpenny letters will be written to the provincial metropolis—thus increasing the number of letters two or three fold, while it tends to diminish the revenue.

Nor will an increase of population produce for some time a proportionate increase of correspondence—a population which should, by natural increase, double itself in twenty years, would not within the twenty years have doubled the number of letter-writers ; and finally, Mr. Hill's own statement of the enormous increase of stage-coach passengers militates, *pro tanto*, though the *tanto* be not great, against an increase of correspondence. *Ipse venit*—the man who comes in person has no need to write,
and

and one journey to town may save a country shopkeeper twenty letters. We say, then, that we have, in the first place, overthrown Mr. Hill's statistical tables, and in the next have suggested some not unimportant reasons why, even if the increase of the post-office revenue did not keep exact pace with the increase of population, it would not be a satisfactory proof that the high rate of duty was the *sole* cause of such a stagnation.

But Mr. Hill supports his theory on this head by the examples of the post-offices of America and France, which he says have progressed rapidly, while ours has been at a stand-still. It is very likely that America and France may have gone on increasing their postages for reasons which do not apply to England. England grows rapidly in population and wealth; but America grows still more rapidly in wealth, population, and, above all, *space*—and space is the peculiar aliment of post-offices. Ten thousand inhabitants added to New York would have little effect on the inland postage, but the ten thousand men pushing themselves in long lines down into the West must needs become customers to the post-offices; and when we read how great commercial cities spring up in the interior, where there was a few years before an uninhabited wilderness, we see sufficient reason why the increase of postage in America should be no measure for England.

In the case of France, Mr. Hill is more particular, and produces figures to show that the *gross* receipts of her post-office have increased from 24,000,000 frs. (960,000*l.*) in 1821 to 37,000,000 frs. (1,480,000*l.*) in 1831. Is it not strange that Mr. Hill, when instituting this comparison between England and France, should have chosen to exhibit the English income in *net*, and the French in *gross*, a difference which, in such a revenue as the post-office, renders all comparison impossible? Why did he not take the trouble to exhibit the English *gross* or the French *net*?—but instead of doing so, he says that it is '*highly probable*' that the French net produce would afford a still more rapid increase, and corroborates his inference that the effective loss to the English post-office is '*even more than two millions per annum.*'—p. 5.

This style of argument from one country to another so dissimilar—from *gross* to *net*—and finally on a '*probability*,' where the actual figures might and ought to have been produced, would authorize us in throwing the whole deduction aside; but we think it worth while to examine it a little further, to show what sort of foundations Mr. Hill builds upon. Between the two terms 1821 and 1835—which Mr. Hill thus compares, to show the *natural* increase of post-office circulation, arising from the gradual progress of population and business—there happened

in France, as we find from M. Piron, three gigantic improvements, sufficient to account for a much larger increase than he quotes :

1st, Up to 1821, through a great part, and particularly the west and south of France, there were posts but *three times a-week*—in that year those posts were made *daily*: this alone produced an increased circulation of five millions of letters in the very first year. (*Piron*, p. 6.)

2nd. Since the year 1821, the conveyance of the French mails has been accelerated by means of *maîles postes*, and other rapid conveyances, in the ratio (as exemplified by the correspondence of Paris with Marseilles) of 156 hours, where before 254 hours were consumed—a saving of 2-5ths.

3rd. In 1829, there were established in France a system of rural posts, answering to the bye and penny posts in England, which in the first year produced an increase of, according to M. Piron's calculation, about four millions and a half of letters. These improvements (like every other that we know of in the French post-office) were borrowed from our system, in which they existed *long before* the period quoted by Mr. Hill;—and of course the sudden *increase* which *they* produced in France could have no corresponding item in the English period—though such an *increase* might be found in the former periods, when these several improvements were introduced in England.

Mr. Hill tells us that there is a *high probability* that the *net* French produces would show a still greater increase. If they did so, under the influence of these improvements—recent in France, but old with us—it would prove nothing but that our old system was a tolerably good one; but we find in the last French budget a remarkable fact, still more creditable to our system, though somewhat at variance with Mr. Hill's conjecture, and which we cannot help suspecting may have been the reason why Mr. Hill did not give us the French net produce in *figures* rather than by *guess*. It is there stated that the whole produce of the French post-office for the current year was estimated at 44,350,000 frs. (1,774,000*l.*), and that the charge of management was no less than 24,110,000 frs. (965,400*l.*), or about 55 per cent.—while the English revenue is collected at a charge of 26 or 27 per cent.

But to apply these statements to his purpose, Mr. Hill finds it necessary to attribute the more flourishing condition of the French revenue (which, as we see, he is far from having proved) to another assumption, which seems equally gratuitous. It arises, he says, from the French postages being '*less exorbitant* than with us.' Certainly the French postages are nominally lower than ours, the highest charge on a single letter being in England 14*d.*,
and

and in France 12*d.*, and so in proportion; but M. Piron, in making a similar complaint against the *exorbitancy* of French postages, says, 'A workman from the Arriège is almost interdicted from a communication with his family: for a *postage of 10d. is the day's wages of his father or his brother.*'—p. 17.

Now we need not take much trouble to prove that the daily wages of the worst paid workmen in England bear a proportion to the French wages of 10*d.** much higher than the ratio of the postages of 14*d.* to 12*d.*: both may be *exorbitant*; but the whole gist of Mr. Hill's argument is, that the French are *less so*, which is clearly not the fact.

We have quoted this passage of M. Piron's book to show that the English postages are not so much *more exorbitant* than those of France as to justify Mr. Hill's argument; but it opens another consideration. The Committee states,—

'Of the inability of the working classes to pay the expense of even a single letter, as now taxed, out of their earnings, little proof is necessary. "Sixpence," says Mr. Brewin, one of the Society of Friends, "is a third of a poor man's daily income. If a gentleman, whose fortune is 1000*l.* a-year, or 3*l.* a day, had to pay one-third of his daily income, that is, a sovereign, for a letter, how often would he write letters of friendship?"'—*Report*, p. 21.

This M. Piron—whose book is little more than an echo and illustration of the English publications, adapted (not always with due acknowledgment) to the meridian of Paris—enforces by asking what a man of 10,000 frs. a-year would say if you were to charge him a day's income, 274 frs. (about 11*l.* sterling), or even half a day's income, 137 frs. (5*l.* 10*s.*) for a letter. Here M. Piron, by an error of his pen or of the press, magnifies the grievance *tenfold* in favour of his and the Committee's argument: for the sums he states are the day's and the half day's portion of an income of 100,000 frs. a-year, whereas 10,000 frs. would give only 27 frs. 4 sous, and 13 frs. 7 sous, or about 1*l.* 2*s.*, and 11*s.* sterling. We conclude this blunder was unintentional; but it is repeated *three* times over, and makes—as such a result might be expected to do—a striking figure in the arguments. But whether applied to a case of 1000*l.* or 10,000*l.* a-year, the principle is, we admit, the same, and begging pardon of Mr. Brewin and M. Piron, a more short-sighted sophism we have seldom met. These wisacres wholly forget that a man of 1000*l.* a-year would probably receive

* M. Piron states in another place the wages of a workman at 20*d.* This difference from the first statement is not explained, but it may mean that the average of wages is 10*d.* in the rural districts, and 20*d.* in *Paris*; but, even then, we may assert that the wages of workmen in *London* bear a greater ratio to 20*d.* than 14 to 12, and every article of expense bears in England a more than proportionable ratio over the price in France.

thirty or forty letters for every *one* which could be addressed to a poor labourer. There can be no doubt that, generally speaking, the number of letters which any man receives bears some proportion to his business, that is to say, his income; and if so, even on Messrs. Brewin and Piron's own argument, the tax falls pretty equally on all. But why confine this philanthropic principle to so slight and rare an incident in a labourer's life as the receipt of a letter? Why not apply it to matters which really and deeply affect every hour of every day of his existence? Why not put the case thus: 'Is it not monstrous that a poor workman should pay for a loaf of bread half his daily income? What would a man of 1000*l.* a-year say if you were to charge him 1*l.* 10*s.* for every loaf of bread consumed in his house?' The same reasoning would apply to the pot of beer, the yard of cloth, the pound of leather—ay, and a *thousand times* more forcibly, we think, than to postages, and would, in short, require the repeal of all taxes that tend to exact from a day-labourer for *any* article, either of use or luxury, a greater *proportion* of his income than it would cost a man of fifty thousand a-year.

But even in the insulated case of the postage, it would not remedy the theoretical grievance; for one penny would still be the eighteenth part of the poor man's daily income, while it would be but the seven hundred and twentieth part of that of the gentleman of 1000*l.* a-year. In principle, and in fact, the comparative hardship would remain the same.

But we must not forget that there are also other circumstances which alleviate the burden of postage to the poor. Their letters are not encumbered with envelopes or inclosures, and the circle of their intercourse is narrow. 'The short and simple annals of the poor' are written at the lowest rates. One great and interesting class of such correspondence—that of soldiers and sailors with their families and friends—is already at a penny postage, and the very limited use that is made of this privilege shows that it is not the high rates of postage alone which restrict the correspondence of parties in that rank. The Duke of Wellington—always remarkable for the sound practical good sense with which he treats every subject—stated that, although no account was kept nor could be rendered of the exact extent to which this privilege was employed, it had lately been proved by the incident of a judicial inquiry, that in a *Scotch* regiment—and the Scotch are remarkable, above all our population, for education and for attachment to home—this privilege produced in six or seven months but sixty-three or sixty-four letters from about 700 men.* This fact,

* There is an account of the number of soldiers and sailors' letters which passed through

fact, and, we believe, the experience of every man who watches the details of such matters, will be a sufficient answer to the vague and problematical evidence of some witnesses who deposed before the Committee as to the yearnings of Irish and other migratory labourers and servants for a correspondence with their native homes. That these respectable witnesses had seen many such instances we readily believe; but their error, we think, lies in arguing *à particulari ad universale*, and of applying these occasional incidents to help out their own pre-adopted theory for a penny post.

These arguments, therefore, as to the *peculiar* hardship on the *poor* of the present system, on which the Committee lays such stress, appear to us to be a mere *ad captandum* exaggeration. But connected with it is a more important consideration, which we may as well take this opportunity of examining—namely, the effect of the high rates of postage on the *moral* condition of the people. Mr. Hill says,—

‘The loss to the revenue is, however, far from being the most serious of the injuries inflicted on society by the high rates of postage. When it is considered how much the *religious, moral, and intellectual* progress of the people would be accelerated by the unobstructed circulation of letters and of the *many cheap and excellent non-political publications* of the present day, the post-office assumes the new and important character of a powerful engine of civilization, capable of performing a distinguished part in the great work of national education, but rendered feeble and inefficient by erroneous financial arrangements.’—p. 8.

The Committee asserts that—

‘The present high rates of postage are extremely injurious to all classes, both in their individual and social capacity, interfering as they do with their progress in *moral and intellectual* improvement, and, in some degree, with their physical welfare. . . . They either act as a grievous tax on the poor, causing them to sacrifice their little earnings to the pleasure or advantage of corresponding with their distant friends, or compel them to forego such intercourse altogether: thus subtracting from the small amount of their enjoyments, and obstructing the growth and maintenance of their best affections.’—p. 6.

And M. Piron is still more particular and pathetic:—

‘Those who have had occasion to consider the moral progress of the youth of the inferior classes who go into service know that when the son begins to neglect his correspondence with his family; when the daughter ceases to write regularly to her mother; when her letters become short and few, the demoralization of the absent child is, *if not already accom-*

through the London office in one week of February, 1838; but, as there is no kind of intimation as to the numbers of men which produced the number of letters, it is of no use to our inquiry.

plished,

plished, close at hand. Society, says an English author, that prepares tread-mills for clerks that rob their employers, and infamy for the girl who commits a *faux pas*, owes it surely to justice, not to disserve, but, on the contrary, to draw as close as possible the salutary ties of family affection, the best guarantees of morality.'—*Piron*, p. 18.

Now, God forbid that we should not feel as strong a desire as Mr. Hill or M. Piron, or even the Committee, can do, to improve the education, and to promote the domestic morals of the people; but we believe that they all exaggerate the importance in these respects of the rates of postage.

Mr. Hill assumes it as an axiom that 'the religious, moral, and intellectual progress of the people would be accelerated by the unobstructed circulation of letters and *non-political* publications;' and we should agree with him, if he could prove his other assumption, that the matters so circulated should be all *excellent* of their kind; but is that the fact? Is there no danger that, instead of '*excellent non-political publications*,' which only, Mr. Hill assumes, are to be thus circulated, there might be no inconsiderable proportion of political publications, and of political publications of no excellent character; and of *non-political* publications whose moral tendencies might not be 'excellent;' nay, which might be deleterious? Is Mr. Hill aware of the predominant character of the unstamped periodical papers that now swarm in our towns? Does he suppose that good order or good morals would be promoted by their almost gratuitous circulation into every remote corner of the empire? And is it the fact that the public appetite, freed from all restraint, will accept only the wholesome and nutritious, and steadily reject the pungent, the luscious, the exciting?—Need we urge this point farther?

But observe his practical inconsistency. It is admitted that already *forty-four millions* of newspapers are gratuitously (so far as the post-office is concerned) circulated, and that *any* periodical print which will subject itself to a penny stamp may be conveyed to any part of the empire at the very rate which he contends for, of a penny. So that the only difference that would be made as to the power of transmitting these prints would be the relieving them from the slight but, as far as it goes, salutary control of the Stamp-Office. But this is not the worst of his inconsistencies. In support of another class of his arguments, he instances the distribution of the '*Penny Magazine*':—

'The magazine is sent to every part of the kingdom, and in considerable towns is delivered at the houses of the subscribers; but the penny charged for the magazine includes not only the cost of distribution, but the cost of eight large pages of letter-press and wood-cuts; and yet it is well known that the undertaking is a profitable one.'—p. 41.

This—

This—which is stated to show that the cost of the conveyance of a letter may be less than a penny—overthrows the supposed necessity of opening the post-office to such publications: for the ‘Penny Magazine’ makes its extensive distribution independently of the post-office. If, after the reduction of the postage, the ‘Penny Magazine’ shall be distributed as it now is, it is a proof that it does not need the assistance of the post-office: if, on the other hand, it should employ the reformed post-office, the price of ‘that powerful engine of civilization’ would be doubled—that is, in fact, the distinctive character of that ‘excellent’ enterprise would be entirely destroyed.

• The Committee, in a tone which seems to us rather hypocritical, lament that the present postages

‘tends greatly to circumscribe the operations of different Societies instituted for the spread of *religion*, the advancement of *morality*, and the promotion of *charitable* objects.’—*Report*, p. 6.

To which we reply—first, why should it be so?—They do not circumscribe the circulation of the ‘Penny Magazine,’ nor even of the ‘Times;’ but secondly, we ask of the Committee, as we did of Mr. Hill, are there no societies in this country which have *other* than *religious*, *moral*, and *charitable* objects—are there no societies which might wish to spread disaffection, irreligion, or faction? or is it improbable that such societies might be formed?—Was the Committee ignorant—we think not—that the radicals in politics, and the sectarians in religion, have been the warmest advocates—and indeed (except the mercantile body we have alluded to) the only very zealous advocates for this penny post? The reason is obvious; because at present such parties cannot circulate their venom without some kind of machinery and agency, which, though it might perhaps cost no more than the penny postage, would attract observation and create a degree of responsibility, and which, besides, can only operate where there has been some preliminary demand from parties desirous of receiving such papers. The printers are responsible—the publishers are responsible—the agents are responsible—the whole proceeding must be public, and liable therefore to the interference of the authorities: whereas, through the safe and sacred medium of the post-office, an illegal society may not only affiliate itself, without possibility of interruption or detection, with similar societies in different quarters, but may *force* their incendiary publications upon parties who had *never* before heard or thought of such mischief: nor is the power that would be conferred of organizing with celerity and security the simultaneous *movements* of the population in distant districts to be wholly disregarded; and on the whole we feel that, so far from the *exclusive* benefits to ‘*order*, *morals*, and *religion*,’ which Mr. Hill

Hill and the Committee put forward, there is, at least, as great a chance of the contrary mischief, and that the proposed penny post might perhaps be more justly characterised as '*Sedition made easy*.' And, finally, let it not be forgotten that checks on useful productions may be removed by a little address and activity (witness the '*Penny Magazine*'), and at worst can amount only to an inconvenience: whereas the facility given to mischievous publications is a positive evil, dangerous to the very existence of society.

M. Piron enters into smaller details, and tells us that children out in service are in great danger of demoralization when they cease to write home—but in the same sentence he admits the obvious truth that the demoralization is the *cause* rather than the *consequence* of the interrupted correspondence. Dr. Moore, as good a judge of human motives as M. Piron, exhibits his *Zeluco*, not as falling into vice because he gave over writing to his mother, but as not writing because that filial duty had grown irksome to a depraved mind; and M. Piron overlooks the fact that the case, *as he states it*, proves unluckily the very reverse of what he intends: for, under the present system, the child has nothing whatsoever to pay on posting the letter to the parent—whereas, under the *new plan*, he or she would have to buy the stamp; which trifling as both the cost and trouble may appear to us, will we apprehend be of some importance to the poor, whose time lost in looking after a stamp would be often more valuable than the old postage.

After all, no one can doubt that the low postage will considerably increase the amount of general correspondence, and nowhere, we believe, so much as in letters of friendship amongst the middle and lower classes—a great advantage—a great increase to individual happiness, and in some cases, perhaps, a preservative from evil by maintaining the family tie; but even this advantage will not be unmixed. Will clerks write only to their fathers, and girls to their mothers? Will not letters of romance or love, intrigue or mischief, increase in at least equal proportions? Does any rational mind doubt that there will be, on this point of the question, a balance of good and evil? And even admitting—what it would be hard to prove—that there should be a preponderance of good, can it be shown that the preponderance will be so great as to compensate the other, as we think, inevitable disadvantages?

But these moral considerations, though so prominently urged by the Reformers, and therefore requiring the foregoing observations on our part, are mainly, as we have said, *ad captum vulgi*. We now approach the more solid motives which have operated with the
most

most influential of Mr. Hill's supporters, which has prompted all the evidence, produced all the petitions, and finally seduced or intimidated the Government—the *mercantile* convenience and advantage.

No one can feel more strongly than we do—and from the very first days of our publication have always done—the vast importance of the mercantile interests of this great commercial empire. We admit it to the largest extent that either Mr. Hill or the Committee can desire. We admit, also, as a general thesis, that the removal of every species of restriction on free commercial intercourse must be *pro tanto* desirable, and that the reduction, and still more the total abolition, of the post-office duties, would have a direct, a general, and, as to the extent and facility of mercantile transactions, a beneficial effect. But, on the other hand, we are prepared to contend, that as long as it is necessary to collect a revenue—as long as it is necessary to maintain that system of public credit, which has created, supported, and developed to their present importance those very mercantile interests—as long as *any* species of taxes or duties are to be levied, there is none more legitimate in principle, or more fair and equitable in practice, than the post-office revenue; nay, none—no, not one in our whole financial system—so much so! This, we think, we shall be able to prove; but much more easy would be our task if the post-office reformers, or the Government, had condescended to intimate from what *other* less objectionable source they would propose to raise an annual net revenue of £1,600,000!

Mr. Hill, indeed, professes that his plan will eventually rather increase than diminish the revenue; and he felt so strongly the danger, and, when he opened his scheme; the unpopularity with all thinking men, of giving up the post-office as a source of revenue, that, although some of his arguments and most of his propositions tend that way, he never openly avowed it: but the Committee—though especially instructed by the House to ‘consider of such a reduction as may be made *without injury to the revenue*,’ and though they recommended a *two-penny* rather than a *penny* rate as necessary to cover the actual cost—appears to us to have had little solicitude about the revenue, and in the principles which they advance to have thrown it over altogether.

They begin by perverting, as we have already hinted, the axiom, for which they quote Lord Lowther and other respectable authorities—that the public convenience was, and ought to be, the first object of the Post-Office, and that *revenue* is but a secondary consideration, or rather, as their whole argument inculcates, of no consideration at all; and this they support by the authority of the preamble of the act of the 12th Charles II. establishing the post-office—that ‘its object was the advantage of trade and commerce’

merce' (Report, p. 10), without any allusion to or consideration of *revenue*, and 'such,' they conclude, 'ought to be the objects with a view to which the Post-Office should be now managed.'

Now this proposition is, we assert, as an historical fact, *totally* untrue:—the public convenience, no doubt, was, and is, and ought to be, in one sense, 'the *primary consideration*,' the most important, the most essential, because it is the basis on which alone the revenue can be raised; but it never was the *primary consideration* in the sense of having been the first creative motive. On the contrary, in every country we believe, but assuredly in England, the post-office was originally an enterprise of individuals—sanctioned no doubt by the royal authority, without which they would not have acted at all—for private profit; and was so conducted ~~the~~ the growing income induced the State to take it altogether ~~the~~ its own hands as a branch of revenue. We find in Rymer (xix. 650) a curious proclamation of Charles I. authorising one Thomas Withering, a private grantee, to establish a post to Scotland, to Ireland, and to the West of England, at the following rates: Under 80 miles, 2*d.* for the single letter; between 80 and 140 miles, 4*d.*; above 140 miles, 6*d.*; and to Scotland, 8*d.*; and if more than one letter in a packet, then to pay according to the number and bulk of the inclosures; and the postmasters (that is, the persons who kept horses for riding post) were to furnish Withering with horses at 2½*d.* per mile each horse. So that the present rates are not more than double what they were at that early time, even in nominal amount; but, in fact, greatly diminished by the altered value of money. The Long Parliament took this business into their own hands, as a source of revenue, and afterwards farmed it, and it was not till the Restoration that it took its present form. The same was the case with the penny-post both in France and England—invented in Paris in the reign of Louis XIV. by a M. de Velay, and conducted for his own profit—in England also, and about the same time, a Mr. Dockwra set up a similar establishment as a private speculation:—so that the pretence so ostentatiously and artfully put forward by the Committee to lead the public mind to this extravagant innovation is a downright misstatement. The House of Commons may, if it pleases, give up the revenue, but it must find some better reason than the silly ~~pun~~ *pun* on the word *primary*. As well might it be said, that, because ~~shops~~ shops and markets are established for public convenience, the public has therefore a moral right to have all the articles sold in shops and markets at *prime cost*.

But, after all, this point is of no practical importance, and we notice it only to set right an historical fact, and to afford a specimen of the spirit of delusion in which Mr. Hill's project has been advocated. No one can doubt that it is equally the duty and

and the interest of the Post-Office to afford to the public every possible convenience and accommodation, subject only, as far as we at present see, to two limitations,—1. that the convenience should be of the nature for which post offices are designed—for example, the post-office should not become common carriers ; and 2. that the revenue should not be essentially impaired, and, above all, not to the advantage of any individual class of interests. Now we believe we can show that the main grievances put forward in the Reports of the Committee arise from the just and proper, as we think, attention of the post-office to these two conditions ; that many of the new accommodations required are not fit objects of post-office service—and, if granted, would essentially impair the revenue, to the chief advantage of individual interests.

A very, indeed the most, prominent grievance is the practice of charging as *double*, letters containing any inclosure. It may at first sight be thought hard that the sending a line of advertisement cut out of a newspaper, or an inch of lace to be matched, neither weighing more than a grain, should involve a double charge. Now that hardship might be remedied, without any other change in our system, by charging by *weight* of quarter or half ounce as in France, instead of by single and double letters as with us—a change which we shall consider on its own merits by and by—but this would not meet the object of the agitators, nor the principles of the Committee. One person contemplates the sending parcels of patent medicines (5657) ; another a box of pills (7791) : one ingenious witness exhibited to the Committee a parcel of two pills and two plasters, which, under Mr. Hill's plan, might be transmitted through the post-office. This clever person forgot that, unless the penny envelope could be made large enough to transmit a *doctor* also to judge whether the medicines were proper for the case, it would be more prudent in the patient to send to his own country apothecary ; but instead of sending either pill, plaster, or doctor, why not send the *prescription*, by which a single letter would suffice to physic a parish ? Another desires to send samples of agricultural seeds (7928), and, for example, 'clover' (7879), which would greatly, he says, benefit agriculture ; but, of course, if 'clover' is so indulgently treated, wheat, beans, and, the most valuable of all, *potatoes* could not be rejected. Mr. Warburton, a member of the Committee, and an eminent timber-merchant, suggests that 'grafts of *trees* might be sent.' 'No doubt,' replies the witness, and 'here are 2400 seeds of larch-fir made up in a half-ounce packet' (7980). 'Every manufacturer agrees in the advantage of sending patterns of *his own* particular ware. One *very prominent* and important witness, whose name the Committee discreetly veils under the random initials of E. F., and whose abode

abode and trade are left in blank, is very desirous of being able to send from fifteen to fifty patterns of goods. We know not what he may deal in—we hope not in ironware or woollen: for we presume the Committee had not yet arrived to such a pitch of post-office reform as to contemplate sending samples of nails or blankets by the post; and yet, why, in strict and equal justice, should the manufacturers of hardware or broadcloth; why even glass or china makers; or the importers of wine or fruits; or Mr. Warburton himself, the timber-merchant, be excluded from an advantage—so great an advantage we are told—as is to be given to other traders? If the principle be once admitted, where are we to draw the line? Weight alone will not do it, for at 1*d.* per half ounce the conveyance would be still so cheap for long distances that many bulky articles might be intruded on the Post-Office.

If our object were merely to amuse our readers, we could fill pages with examples of the trivial, the ludicrous, the extravagant, and discordant propositions which the Committee gravely received, and, as it seems, countenanced, in this portion of their inquiry, which really reads more like the questions and answers in a commission of lunacy than as a discussion between intelligent traders and sober legislators. One circumstance, however, is worthy of notice, as a proof of how impossible it would be to satisfy expectations of this class and character. In the first year of her Majesty's reign, her ministers, under, we have no doubt, the pressure of the same influence that has governed their subsequent proceedings, were induced so far to relax the strict principle of post-office taxation as to pass an act (1 Victoria, c. 34, § 28), 'That packets or covers containing *patterns* or *samples*, not exceeding *one ounce*, without any writing but the name of the sender, his place of abode, and the price of the inclosed article, should pass for the postage of a single letter;' but mark the result. That act is declared by the only two witnesses who were examined on the subject to be 'inoperative' (6674), and 'of very little value' (6897), because of the restriction of the quantity of *written* information. So here is an instance of the reduction of a *triple* to a *single* postage, which has proved to be 'inoperative,' and 'of very little value.' We are satisfied that a calm consideration, not merely of the *rationale* of the subject, but even of the evidence itself, will establish the impolicy, and eventually the mischief, of endeavouring to make the post-office a carrier of parcels, or of any species of merchandise, or of diverting it from its natural and generally understood duties.

This brings us back to the question of rates, and whether they are really so high as to impede, in any such degree as is pretended, the *legitimate* correspondence of the country.

'The

'The present rates,' say the Committee, 'by restricting the transmission of letters of advice, invoices, orders, &c., produce a most serious injury to commerce, and consequently to national prosperity' (*Report*, p. 6); and this assertion is supported by a vast body of evidence, unquestionable in its details, but exceedingly deficient when tried by general principles, and by a large and impartial view of the essential spirit of mercantile enterprise, and the relation between the commercial and the other general interests of the state. Does any one doubt that Custom-house regulations and duties fetter foreign commerce? that the Excise restricts internal consumption? that tolls on roads and canals impede the transport of goods? that light-house duties enhance freights? that the window-tax presses on shops? the coal-tax on comfort? the soap-tax on cleanliness? and even the income-tax, when it existed, on industry and the employment of capital? What branch of our revenue is innocent of that restrictive influence on all the businesses of mankind which is at this moment so prominently objected to the post-office? on which is it that we could not accumulate as great a body of accusatory details as against the post-office? Let rival petitions against the *malt-tax*, and against *postage*, canvass all England for signatures—can it be doubted that the complaint against the malt duties would meet most general countenance?

We do not forget that no species of taxation ought to be *prohibitory* or even *exorbitant*; and if it can be shown, and as far as it can be proved, that the postages are, *in comparison with other public burdens*, excessive, we decidedly agree that they should be reduced: but is there any such proof? There is not even any such allegation. We must here repeat that most important fact, that it is under the present system of post-office revenue—less increased, since its origin, two centuries ago, than any other scale of duties—that all the great commercial interests of the empire have grown to their present unexampled and incalculable prosperity: but, again, we say, if the rates be irregular or exorbitant, let them be revised and reduced: they need not, on that account, be totally repealed.

The Committee complain that letters inclosing 'invoices' and other mercantile documents cannot be sent but under a heavier rate of postage than a common letter: on what possible principle should they? They are actually heavier, they are of greater value: why should weighty and valuable parcels be conveyed as cheaply as a few idle lines of news or the like? Mr. Hill and his co-operators enter into many minute (and, as we shall see presently, very erroneous) details to show that the cost of conveying a letter is *comparatively* nothing: now what is the *comparative* charge on an invoice? We will take the highest possible case:
a letter

a letter on any sized sheet,* with any quantity of writing which it can hold, may be sent from London to Glasgow for 14*d.*; but if, in addition to all the information such a letter may convey, a *separate* invoice or any other inclosure be added, it will cost 14*d.* more. Now we suppose few invoices are sent to such a distance for goods of less value than 20*l.*: in such a case the rate on the invoice would be $\frac{14}{20} = 70\%$ of the value, and if the value were, what we suppose would be a fairer average, 100*l.*, $\frac{14}{100} = 14\%$. And, after all, who pays this comparatively insignificant sum?—not those who make these complaints, but the same consumers—the same public which repay, and generally with usury, the tolls, the duties, the freight, the insurance, and all the other charges which the merchant has advanced on the goods. Why should the smallest, the most insignificant charge, be that against which he should the most loudly remonstrate? Some of the witnesses complain that they are forced, by the exorbitancy of the post-office rates, to forbid their travellers and agents sending them letters of advice:—then the letters of advice are *not worth 6d.*, which is the average of the rates assumed by the witnesses and the Committee; and we think the post-office should rather be thought a friend to business—to the most important ingredient in all business, a merchant's *time*—if it protects him from an influx of letters *not worth sixpence*.

The Committee also complain most pathetically, that postage 'operates to the prejudice of the public health by preventing the transmission of *medical* advice, and interferes, to a serious extent, with *legal* professional correspondence' (*Report*, p. 6): but what proportion does 6*d.* bear to the doctor's or the lawyer's fee, or the apothecary's bill, or, more awful still, to the attorney's bill of costs—to say nothing of the value of the health or the property which may be the subject of the advice?

That we may not be suspected of being tender to our own craft, we must notice the equally unreasonable complaints of authors, editors, and publishers, who produce a mass of evidence to show that it would be a vast convenience to them to be able to transmit their manuscripts and *proofs* backwards and forwards at a penny postage. No doubt—but, even as the case stands, we think they manage the matter pretty well. Look at all the 'Libraries of Useful Knowledge,' 'the Penny Magazine,' 'the Saturday Magazine,' 'Chambers's Journal,' 'the Penny Cyclopædia,' and so forth. Within all country towns they could be *now*, if the editors found it worth while, sent at 1*d.*—in London for 2*d.*—

* A couple of years since some post-office reformer, to prove the absurdity of the *single* and *double* system, circulated letters on single sheets as large as table-cloths—at least we received such a one. He was clearly one of those who would have wished to send the same weight in samples of goods.

and all through the country they may be sent by coach parcels,—a mode of conveyance so cheap and so rapid, that Mr. Hill and the Committee rely mainly on it as a proof of how cheaply the post-office might do its work: where, then, is the need or advantage of a change for *them*?

In the 11,654 questions and answers which the Committee put and received on these subjects, we find two or three which are a conclusive refutation of some thousands which refer to these complaints against mercantile postages, and these are elicited from the most anxious advocates of the new system. Mr. Dillon, a partner in the great haberdashery house of Morrison and Co., says—‘We charge the postage on orders below a certain amount.’ (3539.) The Committee, it seems, did not think it worth while to ask the ‘certain amount;’ but the next witness, Mr. Whittaker, the respectable publisher, states (3693), that ‘unless the order extends from 2*l.* to 3*l.* they charge their correspondent with *postage and commission.*’ Now here is irrefragable proof that postages are, in fact, so insignificant compared with general transactions, that, except for *very small* orders, they are covered by the dealer’s profit, and that even when the order is so low as 3*l.*, there is still profit enough to cover both ‘*postage and commission;*’ and this elucidates with equal force why the very witnesses that give such evidence are amongst the most anxious to get rid of a charge so small as not to be worth making to individual purchasers of 3*l.* worth of goods:—it is simply this, that, charging their goods at the wholesale price, they make a profit which silently covers the postage, even when, as in the cases of the two houses just mentioned, their annual postage should be above 1000*l.* Now if the postages were abolished, the amount would be too insignificant to make any alteration in the price of the article to individual customers, and Messrs. Dillon and Whittaker would each put 1000*l.* a-year of the present post-office revenue into their own private pockets, and we, the public, must be called upon to make good the 1000*l.* thus comfortably realised by Messrs. Whittaker and Dillon. We are no longer surprised at the zeal and subscriptions of the great city houses in this cause, seeing that they expect to pocket a new and net profit—each according to their scale of business—of from 500*l.* to 11,000*l.* a-year, with no other risk, cost, or trouble, than their share in getting up this agitation; but we are surprised that the honourable and intelligent Committee did not see that these two admissions were very complete answers to a great majority of the 11,654 questions which they so diligently put. We confess that we admire their industry more than their sagacity or candour.

In short, we see no evidence and no reason to induce a belief that

that the amount of postages can trammel in any serious degree the great mercantile movements of this country. It is a disagreeable thing to merchants to have to pay in hard cash and on the instant, one, two, or three pounds sterling a-day, when the return must be so distant, and so merged in the general profits, that the postage feels as if it is an immediate and actual loss; but it is quite clear that it falls at last on the consumer, and is, beyond doubt, the lightest of all the fiscal burdens with which any article of general consumption is charged.

The persons on whom postage falls really heaviest are a class that Mr. Hill and the Committee hardly notice—the smaller gentry, who are immediately below the influence of the franking privilege, and who correspond for pleasure, for courtesy, or the petty businesses of life. They, unlike the trader, have no customer on whom eventually to lay the burthen, and we confess that the favourable impression which we originally felt towards the penny-rate was chiefly influenced by a consideration for this class; which, however, being somewhat of a higher order, attracts no sympathy whatsoever from post-office reformers. But, on the other hand, letters are, with this class, a kind of luxury for which they can afford to pay, and which they may, in a considerable degree, if not altogether, regulate at their own option, and according to their circumstances.

We have no means of estimating what the amount of this class of correspondence may be in this country, and the Committee, so minute on other very minor points, give, and perhaps could give, no data upon this; but we were surprised to learn from M. Piron that the number of private letters—that is, not upon mere business—is in France so inconsiderable that he throws it altogether out of consideration. In England, no doubt, a great portion of such correspondence passes under franks; but a very considerable quantity must, we should think, be taxed, and it is for that portion (including the domestic letters of the lower orders) that we should be most anxious for *some* reduction of the rates. The *men of business*, we are well assured, can look after their own interests, and recover, as we have said, with usury, the advances which they are obliged to make.

We have thus touched—slightly and imperfectly, we are aware, but as far as the limits of such a paper as this allow—the general arguments in favour of a reduction of postage, on the score of justice, morality, or commerce; and we think we have indicated (and we pretend to do no more) considerations which tend to show that these arguments are in some instances wholly unfounded, in all the rest very much exaggerated, and certainly not sufficient, on our present information, to warrant so serious an experiment as is about to be made.

We

We now proceed to an examination of the peculiar characteristics of Mr. Hill's plan :

1. The justice of a uniform rate, and the sufficiency of that rate's being only a penny.

2. The economy and convenience of the uniform penny rate.

3. The prospect of an equal amount of revenue derived from economy of management and increase of correspondence.

Though, for the sake of clearness, we divide Mr. Hill's plan into its three great features, it will be seen that in detail they all hang together, and that the reasoning for or against them cannot be kept entirely*separate. We shall, however, endeavour to follow each head with as much distinctness as we can.

There is something startling to the common sense of mankind in the proposition that a letter ought to be conveyed 500 miles for the same charge as for five miles ; but really Mr. Hill makes out a most ingenious, and, if his premises were sound, a very forcible case. His argument lies in a nutshell.

Taking the Edinburgh mail, which he selects as one of the longest and most important, he finds that the cost of conveying the mail of any one night is, by contract, without any reference to its weight, 5*l.* ; * that the average weight of letters and newspapers is 6 cwt., and of the bags 2 cwt., which, deducting the weight of the bags, gives for the cost of conveying a newspaper—at an average weight of 1½ oz.—1-6th of a penny ; and of a single letter—at the average of ¼ oz.—1-36th of a penny. Then 1-36th of a penny being the full cost of a letter from the longest distance, and such a fraction not practically admitting of any proportionable division for smaller distances, he assumes, fairly enough, that no substantial injustice can be done to any party in rating the conveyance of all distances at the uniform rate of 1-36th of a penny. Then, as every letter, whatever be the distance it has travelled, will have been put in at one post-office and delivered at another, the expenses of the two offices are common to all letters, and may, therefore, whatever the amount is, be added to all ; and the result will be that the total expense of conveyance and delivery is, for every practical purpose and with reference to any possible denomination of coin, the same all over the empire ; and so his case is proved with all the accuracy of arithmetic.

Common sense is astounded at such a result, and refuses to believe it—though it cannot at first sight discover where the fallacies lie ; but a little examination will show that, as usual, common sense is right even against the assumed accuracy of arithmetic.

* There is, we think, some subsequent evidence that it is still less, but it is simpler to adopt Mr. Hill's original calculation.

The first fallacy is that, though the cost of the Edinburgh mail be truly stated at 5*l.*, that sum, small as it seems, is not a fair average of the expense of the mails in general in reference to the number of letters conveyed.

The charge being made for the *trip* without reference to weight or number, the heavy-laden mails convey individual letters cheaper than the light. If the mail carried but five letters, each letter would cost 1*l.*, while 1200 would cost but a penny each : Mr. Hill, therefore, in the apparent fairness of selecting the Edinburgh mail as being the *longest*, really took an unfair instance, as it is also one of the *heaviest*—that is, one in which the individual cost of a letter is *lightest*. The Louth (Lincolnshire) mail, for instance, which is one of the light mails, costs *above* 1½*d.* per letter for 148 miles : on a new contract which had just come into operation, at the time of the evidence of Lord Lichfield, the Postmaster-General, the expense of that mail would be increased by about 1-6th ;—and the average of the kingdom cannot be taken, according to the evidence of the Postmaster-General (2786), at less than 1*d.*, instead of 1-36th, as Mr. Hill states. So vanishes his whole fabric at one blow ; for the naked cost of conveyance, without any other charges of management, equals the whole of his proposed postage. Another great source of Mr. Hill's error is, that he reckons, as we have seen, the *newspapers* as bearing their proportionable share of the burden at the rate of 1½*oz.* weight, and 1-6th of a penny charge, and he has further deducted the weight of the bags ; but, instead of *deducting* the sums equivalent to these respective weights, he should, in fact, have *added* them, for newspapers go free, as do a large number of franked letters : the *paying* letters—which to Edinburgh average about 1500 only in number—must pay for both newspapers and franks, as well as for the weight of the bags ;—and the result, as stated in the very clear and clever evidence of Lord Lichfield, is, that the average Edinburgh letter, instead of being, as Mr. Hill assumes, 1-36th, is, in truth, above 3-4ths of a penny.

But this is not all. The mail-coaches are exempted from *tolls*, a privilege which Mr. Hill says that his brother reformer, Sir Henry Parnell, estimates as of itself a sufficient public remuneration for the conveyance of the mail *—an opinion in which he seems to concur. Nor yet is this all :—

The superior certainty and security which the superintendence of the government gives to the mails, the protection of the government guards, and other similar advantages, enable the mail-coach

* Mr. Hill indeed says that the stage-coach duty may be set off against the tolls ; but this is absurd, as the stage-coach duties fall on all coaches alike, and would be paid, together with the *tolls*, by these coaches, even if they carried no mails at all.

owners to charge higher rates for passengers (5285) and parcels (6887) than ordinary coaches. We have taken the trouble of inquiring what this advantage may be in the Edinburgh mail, and we find that a passenger by the best stage-coach is charged 6*l.* 10*s.* only, whereas by the mail he pays 7*l.* 7*s.*, or about 12 per cent. in favour of the mail; and a parcel under 12*lbs.* costs by the mail 6*s.* 2*d.*, and by the ordinary coach 5*s.* 2*d.*, being near 20 per cent. in favour of the mail; and so well understood is all this, that a mail-coach contractor who has a bad bargain still offers to do the work if the post-office will allow him to take another passenger. It is clear that all these advantages to the mail-coaches come eventually out of the public pocket, and tend additionally, if any addition were necessary, to the discomfiture of Mr. Hill's calculation of the abstract expense of the conveyance of a letter. But a very remarkable circumstance, strongly elucidatory of this part of the subject, and which alone ought to have suspended the Government's confidence in Mr. Hill's argument, has lately occurred. Stage-coaches plying for the conveyance of passengers between place and place were always anxious, for the sake of the advantages we have alluded to, and to secure so constant and important a customer as the post-office, to assume the character of *mails*, and to convey the bags at very moderate rates indeed—rates which bore but an imperfect proportion to the actual benefit derived by the public. But lo! *railroads* came into the market—they were susceptible of no subsidiary advantages from the post-office, and would only carry their mails at what they considered the real value of the accommodation;—and that value was so *excessively* beyond what the post-office was in the habit of *paying* the coaches, that the government were obliged to pass an *ex post facto* law to oblige the railroads to convey the mails at a rate to be settled by arbitration. This was a violent remedy; but even under it we understand that the post-office is obliged to pay to the railroads *six times* the sum it used to pay to the coaches. After this fact, what becomes of Mr. Hill's ingenious calculation that this cost of the conveyance of a letter is a sum too minute to be perceived? Need we say a word more on this part of the subject? Of all the witnesses that approved of the system of a uniform penny rate, there are but two (whom we shall notice presently) who do not rest their approbation on Mr. Hill's proof that 'the conveyance *costs next to nothing*,' and is, therefore, the same for all distances. Lord Ashburton—by far the weightiest authority in its favour, and indeed the only one of all the favouring witnesses who treats the subject with perfect candour and common sense—repeatedly says that he speaks only on the 'calculations' and '*ex parte* statements of Mr. Hill, showing that distance made, *in fact*,

fact, no perceptible difference in the expense.' (8167, &c.) Mr. Browne (7021) 'assumes that Mr. Hill's calculations are correct,' (6625), 'and takes them for granted.' Mr. Brewin says, 'I follow Hill; I have no means of testing his calculations.' (7972.) Dr. Birkbeck 'takes Mr. Hill's estimate, that the conveyance of a letter to Edinburgh costs but 1-36th of a penny.' (8040.) Mr. E. F. 'knows nothing of the expenses of conveying letters other than as is given in Mr. Hill's pamphlet, and has no means of knowing whether it is correct.' (4280.) Mr. Murray 'takes the statements of Mr. Hill's pamphlet for granted,' (5822) 'and has himself made no calculation as to the cost'—(5851); and so on.

We have shown, however, that these calculations are substantially and importantly erroneous; and so fall to the ground all the evidence, the reasonings, and the opinions thus avowedly founded on them, and on them alone. Our readers will observe that we are not now inquiring whether a uniform rate of *two-pence* or *three-pence* might not cover the expenses—that is another question: our *present* business is with Mr. Hill's specific calculations; and these, we say, have in this particular entirely broken down. Of any modification of his plan we are not now giving an opinion; but *THE specific plan* has, we assert again, failed in another of its main foundations.

But there are two witnesses who are advocates for a uniformity of rate on abstract principles, without troubling themselves with Mr. Hill's calculation of the identity of cost in all cases; and—as we have no doubt that *now* that the *fact* has broken down under Mr. Hill's paradox, he and his supporters will fall back on the abstract justice of a uniform rate of postage, even though the rate of conveyance should vary—we think it worth while to notice these, otherwise only ridiculous, evidences. Mr. John Dillon says,—

'So far from thinking that it is reasonable that the tax upon letters should be in proportion to the distance, it has occurred to me that the *contrary* might, with advantage, take place, and that the tax on letters should be *inversely* and not directly in proportion to the distance. Persons living near the metropolis have already sufficient advantages and facilities of intercourse; and I believe the tax on postage is the only tax which a man at Edinburgh pays at a higher rate than a man living in the neighbourhood of London.' (3574.)

This gentleman, who must, we think, be a countryman of Sir Boyle Roache's, is obviously of opinion that it is farther from London to Edinburgh than it is from Edinburgh to London; and that a man in Edinburgh pays more for a London letter than a man in London for an Edinburgh letter. Yet the Committee listened with all respect to this Hibernian stuff, and asked this

this clear-headed witness, no less than 170 questions, without thinking it necessary to remind him that a man in Edinburgh receives letters from all Scotland—the natural sphere of his business—and from the north of England, and from the north of Ireland, and, by way of Glasgow, ship-letters from America and the West Indies, and directly from Holland and the north of Europe, at rates considerably lower than the inhabitant of London. The other witness, a Scotch metaphysician, surpasses the last witness in absurdity. Mr. Dillon only confounds distance; Mr. Simpson first confounds, and then annihilates it. Dr. Lardner, who had been previously examined, had, though a zealous friend to the penny rate, too much good sense to maintain the abstract justice of a *uniform* rate. He had stated—

‘that he thought a uniform rate, when viewed as a *matter of convenience*, was desirable; but *per se* it is unjust: it is wholly disproportionate to the *value* of the thing you get, and has nothing to recommend it but its simplicity. (5553.)

‘Q. You do not think that, looking at it on the ground of justice, an uniform rate is required?—A. Certainly not; quite the reverse: it makes the short distances pay for the long. To a person who has large correspondence with different parts of the country, it is of no consequence, for he gains as much by the long as he loses by the short; but there are many persons, all whose letters are short, and they manifestly pay the postage of those whose letters are long.’ (5554.)

In order to rebut this plain and common-sense state of the case, Mr. Simpson, who describes himself as ‘a Scotch barrister, author of the *Philosophy of Education*, and a *Lecturer* on that subject,’ is produced, and when he is asked whether it would be better to have a uniform rate, or a rate proportionate to the expense of conveyance, the philosophical author and lecturer replies,—

‘It appears to me that there is a fallacy at the bottom of *that* proposition.’

Two opposite propositions had been, we see, propounded, to which he replies as ‘*that proposition*,’ without specifying which of the two he means; but we guess from the context that he considers the fallacy as lying ‘*at the bottom*’ of the proposition for fixing the rate in proportion to the *distance*. After this little stumble at the threshold, the philosopher proceeds:—

‘I conceive *distance* and *nearness*, as to this question, is the *same* all over the country—that a locality is near one place and distant from another, and *vice versa*.’

Pro-di-gi-ous!—Dominie Sampson would have exclaimed, had he lived to witness the wonderful discoveries of Dominie Simpson; who proceeds to state,—

‘that

'that in a correspondence, which implies that an answer is to come back, the advantage is thrown into *each hand alternately*.'

This, we see, is a luculent version of Mr. Dillon's problem, that if a letter goes a *long* distance, the answer can have only a *short* one to come back; and that the *same* correspondence is thus *alternately long and short*, and compensates itself; whereas we should rather have thought that a *correspondence* which 'implies,' as Mr. Simpson accurately and ably observes, 'that an answer is to come back,' also implies that the letter and its answer will travel the same distance. There may, indeed, be some doubts whether, by 'each hand alternately,' Mr. Simpson means—as at first sight he seems to do—the hands of *one* individual, and is not rather speaking of 'each hand' as the hand of two different and unconnected persons; for he proceeds:—

'If one (hand) has the advantage of being near Edinburgh, another has the advantage of being near London; but the one near London is distant from Edinburgh; and as correspondence means a circle—[in what language, Dominie?]*—it means letters and answers; the thing [what thing?] is brought to an equality.*'

This, we think, settles the question, that 'each *hand*' belongs to a different *body*; for there is no man alive, we suppose, except the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whose hands are long enough to be in London and Edinburgh at the same time; but if this be so, what becomes of the promised '*alternate compensation*?'—for the lecturer will hardly convince Dr. Lardner that a man who lives twenty miles from town, and pays dear for a short correspondence, will be adequately *compensated* because another man, who lives 200 miles off, and whom he never saw nor heard of, pays cheap for a long correspondence. But all this is rational and intelligible compared with the proposition with which the lecturer winds up and concludes his brilliant argumentation:—

'I do not see, therefore, that there is any difficulty in the way of making those who are *near* pay for those who are *distant*, because—[what, for a ducat?]*—because there is no nearness and distance absolutely, but only relatively; and those who are near to one place are distant from another place, and vice versâ.*' (9820.)

It may be from the imperfection of our *education*, never having had the advantage of Mr. Simpson's instruction; but we fairly confess that we have not the slightest conception of what—in any view, either of individual justice or general principle—this profound—to us unfathomably profound—philosopher can possibly mean; and there we must leave it.

~ But let us try the question of distance by a practical example. The carriage of a small parcel from London to Barnet may be 1s.; to Edinburgh, 6s. 2d. It makes not the slightest practical difference,

difference, in point of outlay, to the coach-owner whether that individual parcel goes to Edinburgh or Barnet ; its weight is not perceptible : it must be received and delivered, whether at Barnet or Edinburgh ; and its relative share of the expenses of the whole coach establishment (instead of being 1-36th of a penny, as in the case of a letter) is probably not 1-360th ; and to use the words which Mr. Hill applies to the case of letters,—

‘ It is not a matter of inference, but a matter of fact, that the expense to the post-office (or *coach-owner*) is practically the same whether a letter (or *parcel*) is going from London to Barnet, or from London to Edinburgh : the difference is not expressible in the smallest coin we have.’—*Evid.* 114.

But is there any man so insane as to say that it is consistent with justice or common sense that the parcel should be delivered at Edinburgh for the same rate as at Barnet ? The proposition is really too absurd to be reasoned upon. Those who can believe in it must also believe that a man has a right to have his *person* conveyed from place to place, be they Paddington or John o’ Groat’s House, at the same uniform rate as his parcels and letters. We, on the contrary, so far from discarding all consideration of distance, assert that *distance* is the chief ingredient—indeed, we might say, the very *sine quâ non* and essence—of any and every system of post-office charge. It is the *constant*, as it is called, of every proposition on the subject. If it were not for *distance*, there would be no post-offices at all. The *intrinsic value* of the conveyance of a letter is a very different thing from its *cost*, and, as Dr. Lardner suggests, the *value* is exactly equal to the time, trouble, and expense which is saved to the correspondent—of which the best, if not the only measure is *distance* ; and as the difficulty of private conveyance increases (even to impossibility) with increasing distances, so must increase, in gradations proportional to the distances, the *value* of the conveyance. The gods must annihilate both time and space before a uniform rate of postage can be reasonable or just.

That there would be a certain degree of convenience to the public and to the post-office (though even that is overrated) in a uniform tax, we shall not contest ; but there never can be, even under Mr. Hill’s own views, a strict uniformity. All letters of above half-ounce weight, and of as many classes as half-ounces, all foreign letters, all ship letters, and all the letters delivered in local districts from central offices, which Mr. Hill calls a ‘secondary distribution,’ all these are, even on his own view, exceptions to the uniform rate ; and the moment that *any* exception to the principle of absolute uniformity is admitted, it follows that the several post-offices cannot be reduced to that condition of mere *machines* for receipt and distribution,

on

on which so much of the simplicity and economy of the whole plan depends. The post-offices must be all maintained just as at present; the charge on all those exceptional classes of letters must be, as now, collected by pre-payment, or by the letter-carriers from door to door, and must be accounted for to, and afterwards by, the several postmasters; and though the sum-total will be greatly reduced, no particle of the system of account and control can be abandoned, even in the poorest village office. So that all the expense will remain, with not a tithe of the profit.

We cannot give a stronger instance of the impossibility of carrying the principle of uniformity into practice, than to state the clumsy and absurd shift by which in one very important class of cases Mr. Hill endeavoured to overcome the difficulty. His principle being that all letters should be *pre-paid* at the rate of 1d., and distributed mechanically, without further demand or delay, it was asked how foreign letters, arriving in England and already charged with heavy postages, were to be dealt with? This was a puzzler; and will it be believed how Mr. Hill proposed to surmount the difficulty?—why, by abandoning the foreign postage altogether! the letter to be delivered *free*, and the postage to be paid to the *foreign state*, out of the *public purse*. No wonder the great houses engaged in foreign trade should approve a plan by which the British community were to pay their postages, and pay them, too, into the treasuries of France or Belgium. Monstrous! ‘O but,’ said Mr. Hill, ‘I can so arrange it that the British community shall suffer no loss, for though I must needs deliver the *incoming* letter free, I will charge all *outgoing* letters double.’ Admirable *uniformity*! One batch of letters is to be charged double in order that another batch of letters shall go free. But if there could be any semblance of rationality in such a plan, the British community would have to pay both ways, for why should any individual sending a letter abroad be called upon to pay the postage of those which some other persons may perchance receive? Mr. Hill seems to imagine that the foreign correspondents shall pay both ways, but he does not tell us how he can obtain it from the foreign correspondent.

And, after all, this clever device is only the old story of the world, the elephant, and the tortoise: for, though it gets rid of the difficulty of keeping up the post-offices on the existing system for *delivering* incoming letters, it does necessitate their maintenance for *receiving* the postages on the *outgoing* letters—and so here again we come back to the difficulty which we made these monstrous and ridiculous shifts to avoid.

Thus vanish all hopes of economy from the total abolition of the cash and accountant departments of the post-office.

But another supposed source of economy was the reduced
number

number of hands that would be sufficient to manipulate a uniform and *pre-paid* system. Letters would require no examination, no taxation, no check—a mere blind *counting* of the *number* would suffice for all purposes; and indeed we know not for what useful purpose even the counting could be necessary:—of course, then, all the examining, taxing, checking clerks may be dismissed at once. Not so fast! In the first place, Mr. Hill computes that there will be five or six times more letters to deal with—some witnesses say ten or twelve times more—this would require five or ten times the quantity of manual labour, which would more than counterbalance any possible reduction of the other class; but, moreover, we have seen that it is impossible to effect an absolutely uniformity of rate—the uniformity will exist only for a single class of letters, those under half an ounce weight: all exceeding that weight, all included in what Mr. Hill called the ‘secondary distribution,’ all foreign letters outwards—these will be all liable to varying rates;—and therefore every individual letter must be examined as at present, to detect those that may be liable to the additional charge; and these must be further, not merely counted, but weighed, taxed, computed, and carried to account exactly as at present, and with more haste and confusion: because, as all the delivery must be made at the same hours—for it is not, we presume, intended that those who pay most are to be served last—and as the course of the penny letters through the office is assumed to be so rapid, the excepted class must be managed with accelerated velocity to get them ready for delivery at the same time. There was some talk in the Committee about a *tell-tale* machine for counting and weighing, and Mr. Hill, and we think some other witness, mentioned that such a machine was, or was to be, attempted. We readily admit that such a machine might be made to give either *weight* or *numbers*, but we can hardly imagine how it could give *both*, which is what would be required; nor do we see how such a machine, if constructed, could be beneficially employed—and we believe that the general opinion even in the Committee ultimately was that no considerable saving of either time or labour could be produced in that way: and finally, we think there was not one practical man who conceived that any reduction in the personal establishment of the post-offices would be effected, while it is certain either that the Stamp-office is now very exorbitantly over-manned, or the additional duty of supplying and accounting for *four or five hundred millions* of stamps must require *some* additional hands.

Mr. Hill also supposes that a ‘considerable diminution should be made in the number of letter-carriers, whose salaries, small individually, are considerable by their numbers.’ Now the increased

creased facility of the delivery is the single point (we think) of Mr. Hill's whole plan to which we can agree without difficulty or reserve, and yet we cannot arrive at the same conclusion as to the diminution of the number of letter-carriers. It will certainly be a most convenient saving of time if it can be managed that the letter-carriers have only to deliver, with mechanical rapidity, the letters at the several doors, instead of waiting for payment, which involves an indefinite delay; but, as the exempted classes of letters must equally be delivered, and if the number of all sorts of letters is to increase four or five fold, we do not see how it can be expected that the number of letter-carriers should be reduced.

As to any diminution of the salaries of the post-masters or letter-carriers, we have no expectation that it could be realized. We think, on the contrary, they must necessarily be increased in *number* by the additional spread of *correspondence*, and probably not reduced in *amount* of salary to any noticeable degree—for we think their responsibility, and the necessity of having persons of character in that trust, will be very much increased: since (besides that they will still have money accounts on all letters of the excepted classes) there will be more liability and temptation to negligence or fraud, in dealing with an undistinguishable mass of penny letters, than at present. At present, all letters, being charged, must be accounted for, and the charge itself is a kind of *ear-mark* by which a letter may be traced, so that there is now a *financial check* and a *material check*, in addition to the *moral check*—whereas with the pre-paid penny letters there will be neither financial nor material check; therefore the moral check will require to be enforced rather than relaxed;—the characters of the post-masters and letter-carriers will become of more importance than ever; and, of course, the remuneration to a superior class of persons cannot be calculated at an inferior rate. Thus, we think, vanish any reasonable expectations of financial reduction in the establishment of the post-offices; and, indeed, Mr. Hill, in his later views, seems to admit that there will be a great increase on the charges of management.

But the other part of this subject—the mode of establishing any adequate check on the letter-carriers—is still more important, and appears to us the most difficult problem of the whole series. What security can there be for the delivery of letters for which the carrier is to bring back no return? ‘But,’ said Mr. Warburton, ‘newspapers now go free, yet are never lost.’ The fact we believe is not so; but if it were, Sir Robert Peel’s answer to Mr. Warburton is conclusive—a man expects his newspaper, and will inquire after it if missing—not so with letters—their loss can only be detected in cases where answers are expected; and even then,

then, who could prove where or how the letter or the answer was lost?—but, moreover, the newspaper is not worth abstracting, and accompanying, as it now does, paying letters, there is no temptation and no opportunity for its abstraction. The case of letters is altogether different—there will be great temptation, unbounded opportunity, and no check. Mr. Warburton said something about a registration. What! a registration at every letter-box and a receipt at every door?—Nonsense! Ten times the number of hands and ten times the quantity of time now employed would not suffice for such a system. We confess we see no good answer to this difficulty.

We now arrive at the most plausible and most important consideration of the ‘public convenience.’ We beg leave to set aside in this part of the subject all idea of the *pecuniary* convenience, of which we have already treated: we are *here* to consider the mere convenience as to practical operations. The first great principle on this head, namely, *pre-payment* by means of a stamp or stamped cover, is universally admitted to be quite the reverse of convenient, foreign to the habits of the people, and likely, however slight the pre-payment may be, to excite some dissatisfaction in the poorer classes, and occasional difficulties to all:—but it would, we believe, be readily accepted as the price of the many other promised advantages. We will raise no objection about the practical details, however embarrassing they may appear. We take for granted that either by stamped *wafers*, by stamped *writing-paper*, or by stamped *covers*, the problem may be practically solved. We shall lay no stress on the danger of forgery, nor on any general difficulty in obtaining the stamps. We concede, for argument’s sake, all that Mr. Hill requires on this head; but, though we raise no argumentative objections on this point, we think it right to offer some suggestions on the advantages and disadvantages of each of the proposed modes of employing the stamp.

The most simple and perhaps convenient of all would be the *stamped wafer*, which should at once *seal* and *frank* the letter; but there is, we fear, an insuperable objection to this plan, namely, that there would be no security for the contents of the letter, as the wafer stamp could be easily removed and replaced by another, at the expense, to the *inquisitor* or *depredator*, of only a penny.

Wafer stamps—not to be used as seals, but affixed to the face of the letter—would also be convenient, and might be made of different colours to carry different weights; or by affixing two or more you might reach the extra weight of a more than half-ounce letter: to these there is no other objection, that we are aware of, than their liability to be rubbed off, if *carelessly* affixed; and no one who has not seen the interior of a post-office can imagine the
amount

amount of carelessness and blunder which the public commit even now in the details of making up their letters.

To stamped *writing-paper* there are several practical objections. First, it will force one to keep a supply of the various classes of stamped paper at hand—a pecuniary advance which may be sometimes inconvenient—or else to send out to buy, on the sudden, the kind of paper you may want, which will be often troublesome, and sometimes, in the country, very difficult: secondly, all mankind must be *forced* to fold their letters in the same form, so that the stamp shall always come to the surface: thirdly, the length of your letter and the weight of any enclosure it is to contain must be *predetermined* before you begin to write, lest you should employ an inadequate stamp: fourthly, if, *inter scribendum*, you should make any error that should induce you to re-write the letter, the stamp may be lost, for it would never be worth while to trouble the Stamp-office to refund a penny for the damaged stamp.

The stamped *cover* seems the most popular of all these devices; but, while we allow to the principle the merit of great ingenuity and many plausible advantages, we must confess that we think it is also liable to considerable abatement.

M. Piron tells us that the idea of a post-paid envelope originated early in the reign of Louis XIV. with M. de Velay, who, in 1653, established (with royal approbation) a private penny-post, placing boxes at the corners of the streets for the reception of letters wrapped up in envelopes, which were to be bought at offices established for that purpose. M. de Velay had also caused to be printed certain *forms* of *billets* or notes, applicable to the ordinary business among the inhabitants of great towns, with blanks, which were to be filled up by the pen with such special matter as might complete the writer's object. One of these *billets* has been preserved to our times by a pleasant misapplication of it. Pélisson, Mde. de Sevigné's friend, and the object of the *bon mot*, that 'he abused the privilege which men have of being ugly,' was amused at this kind of skeleton correspondence, and, under the affected name of *Pisandre*, (according to the pedantic fashion of the day,) he filled up and addressed one of these forms to the celebrated Mademoiselle de Scuderi, in her *pseudonyme* of *Sappho*. This strange *billet-doux* has happened, from the celebrity of the parties, to be preserved, and it is still extant, one of the oldest, we presume, of penny-post letters, and a curious example of a *pre-paying* envelope,—a new proof of the adage that 'there is nothing new under the sun.' We venture to give, as a gleam of amusement in this tedious discussion, a fac-simile of this curious note: our readers will readily distinguish the words added with the pen in the original.

But

* Mademoiselle,

Mandez-moy si vous ne sçavez point quelque
bon remède contre l'amour ou contre
l'absence,

et si vous n'en connoisez point, faites-moy le
 plaisir de vous en enquérir, et, au cas que vous
 en trouverez, de l'envoyer à

Votre très humble et très=

obéissant Serviteur,



Pisandre.

Outre le billet de port payé que l'on mettra sur cette
 lettre pour la faire partir, celui qui écrira aura soing, s'il
 veut avoir reponse, d'envoyer un autre billet de port payé
 enfermé dans sa lettre.

Pour M^{ademoiselle}

Sappho

demeurant en la rue au Pays des
Nouveaux Sansonales

A Paris.

Par billet de port payé.

But this device had been long forgotten even in France; and we have no doubt that when Mr. Charles Knight, an extensive publisher, as well as an intelligent literary man, proposed, some years since, a stamped cover for the circulation of newspapers, he was under no obligation for the idea to Monsieur de Velay. Mr. Hill, adopting Mr. Knight's suggestion, has applied it to the general purposes of the post-office with an ingenuity and address which make it his own.

This part of the proposition is very popular, particularly with the higher and middle classes, because it is the fashion, and a mark of *bon ton*, to enclose one's letter in an envelope, even *though*, or perhaps *because*, it subjects it to double postage. A scheme, therefore, that enables all to indulge in this little aristocratic convenience is pretty generally acceptable: an envelope is, besides, more easily sealed, and more secure when *properly** sealed. But it also has its practical objections. The vast majority of letters (in the proportion of 700 to 52, 2nd Rep., App. 7) are letters written on single sheets of writing-paper, which sheets are little more than equal to two covers—so that the weight and expense of the paper of every single letter will be increased one-third; and as it will not, we presume, be possible to write on the inside of the envelope, one-fifth of the quantity of writing-space afforded by equal weights of paper will be lost. This increase of weight and diminution of space, though next to nothing in an individual letter, may be of some consideration when we come to deal with *hundreds of millions*.

The stationers and paper-makers are in considerable alarm about the adoption of covers, which they fear may throw the whole supply into the hands of parties who have now a patent for a paper which defies forgery; but this alarm we think groundless—there can be no serious danger from forgery, and none at all that the government will give a monopoly to any set of men. It will probably find itself obliged to adopt *all* of the three proposed modes, stamped *wafers*, stamped *covers*, and stamped *letter-paper*—which may occasion some slight difficulties in the post-office, and some accidental expense to individuals by the loss on stamps spoiled, misapplied, or applied twice over to the same letter—but neither, we think, to a degree worth consideration.

The convenience of the cover, however, would be equally given

* We say *properly*—because, if the cover be not so formed that the seal *shall* attach itself to each of the four folds which form the back of the cover—in other words, so that the four points *exactly meet*—nothing can be so easy as to detach one of the folds, extract the letter, and replace it without any possibility of detection. The covers now in use are generally very unsafe in this point.

to the public, without the stamp or any alteration in the post-office system, by adopting the mode of charging letters by *weight*, as is universal on the continent, instead of by *single* or *double*, as hitherto practised in England.

This change would be convenient in many respects, and remove many petty vexations, but we fear it might give rise to more than it would remove, and particularly with the lower classes. Every one knows what a *single sheet* of paper is, and that if he confines himself to a *single sheet*, whatever be its size or weight, he will be charged only for a single letter: this is a vast practical convenience and security against mistakes and squabbles with the post-office; but weights are liable to doubt and error, particularly weights so minute as to turn a half-ounce scale: a damp sheet of paper will turn it, when a dry one of the same size and quality would not. The addition of the seal, or the difference between a seal and a wafer, will often have the same effect, and even though every man were to carry scales in his pocket, mistakes would be frequent, and disputes and complaints about overcharges infinitely increased. And, after the best consideration we can give the subject, we rather incline to think that it will be found in practice that the *single and double* mode of charging is the least liable to error on the part of the letter-writers. So that here, again, we think the balance of convenience is rather against Mr. Hill's plan, with, however, we are bound to add, one important alleviation, namely, that any mistake which may happen, instead of costing sixpence as now, will cost but an additional penny. This, however, belongs rather to the money part of the question, to which we now proceed.

None of the witnesses, certainly none of any weight, pretend that Mr. Hill's plan could be adopted without a great present defalcation of revenue. Lord Ashburton, infinitely the most judicious of all, thinks that the reduction to a penny would wholly destroy the revenue: Lord Lowther himself, if we may judge by his votes in the Committee, is of the same opinion, and thinks twopence the smallest rate that would cover the expenses; and the Committee itself, after a long struggle, negatived both a *penny* and a *three-halfpenny* rate as inadequate, and finally recommended the adoption of *twopence*. But Mr. Hill and the great body of witnesses, many of them of great respectability and intelligence, think that the vast increase of correspondence would, in a few years, fully compensate, and finally increase the revenue. We, however, are, on the contrary, obliged to declare our concurrence on this point with Lords Ashburton and Lowther, the Committee, and the minority of the witnesses; and we do so the rather, because the witnesses who speculate on such prodigious increases

increases are, with one or two exceptions, persons who have such an immediate and direct interest in carrying the new project, as cannot but influence their opinions.

The first circumstance we shall notice is the very remarkable suspicion which Mr. Hill himself showed of his calculations in this respect. There is a large and very interesting class of letters which are now distributed by *local* posts, and for which one penny each in addition to the general postage is charged—this Mr. Hill called ‘the secondary distribution;’ and in this he originally proposed that there should be no alteration—but that all those districts should continue to pay the additional penny. Here was *justice and uniformity* with a vengeance!—a small town or village in the neighbourhood of London, or any other post town, would have to pay for a letter which might not have travelled ten miles, *twice as much* as the postage of a letter from London to Edinburgh! and the extent to which this monstrous anomaly (which has nothing like a parallel in all the real or fancied grievances alleged against the present system) would affect the country, may be judged by the fact that the post-offices of *primary* distribution which are to pay only one penny are, in England and Wales, 356: while the post-offices of *secondary* distribution, on which the double rate of twopence was to be inflicted, are no less than 1475 (2nd Rept. App. No. 28)—above *four times* the former number!!! The only imaginable motive for this otherwise unaccountable departure from all *justice and uniformity* is the conviction of the projector that the penny was totally inadequate even to meet the expenses, and that therefore it was convenient to eke it out by a double postage on the 1475 villages and their respective districts—which being small and scattered, and having been habituated to pay an additional postage, might not, it was probably hoped, have the spirit or the union necessary to defeat the imposition. And this was an item in the very same plan which proposed to relieve the *central post towns* from the penny which they now pay for internal distribution!—and yet all this was argued by Mr. Hill with at least as much force and plausibility and pertinacity as any other part of his scheme (pp. 55—59, and Evid. *passim*); but when he found that so scandalous an infraction of his own principles could not be tolerated, he thought it most prudent to slip quietly out of this proposition, and—after having been examined before the Committee four several days, and having persisted, in spite of a sensible cross-examination by Lord Seymour, in his scheme of the secondary charge—he at length addressed a letter to the chairman, ‘withdrawing the distinction between primary and secondary distribution,’ and of course all the calculations of expense which were founded on it. But mark

the effect of this manœuvre on the general question. Mr. Hill assumed that he had only to provide for the expense of the establishments and the *primary* distribution, which he estimates at 426,517*l.*, and if his plan should only *double* the *present* number of chargeable letters, the produce would, at the penny rate, be 738,400*l.*, which would pay all expenses and leave a net profit to the revenue of 276,000*l.*; but, now, the secondary distribution is abandoned, and its amount must therefore be added to the *expense* side of the account, and being 270,000*l.* will absorb (within a few thousand pounds) all the calculated surplus, and leave the Exchequer minus the whole of the *present* revenue of 1,600,000*l.*

We do intreat the attention of the public to these extraordinary circumstances, which cast, we think, a very considerable doubt over—if not Mr. Hill's candour—at least the whole of his calculations, or perhaps we should better call them speculations: this incident increases very much our apprehensions that he is very far from being a safe guide.

The gross receipts of the post-office for the year	
1837, were	462,269
Deduct repayments	122,532
<hr/>	
Real gross receipts	£ 2,339,737
Total charges of management	698,632
<hr/>	
Net produce to the Exchequer	£ 1,641,105

We must here pause to observe, that, from the variety of views and forms in which the accounts are presented, and, perhaps, (as the Committee hint) from some official laxity, it is very difficult—all through Mr. Hill's pamphlet and the Committee's reports—to bring the results to a precise arithmetical agreement. We shall, whenever we can, adopt the figures of the Committee in their final report; but even there we meet with embarrassing variations: for instance, in this all-important article of the *net* produce of 1837, it is stated, at the foot of page 10 of the Report, at 1,641,105*l.*, as we have given it above, but at the top of the very next page, 11, it is stated at 1,658,479*l.*, being a difference of 17,000*l.*; which, though it may seem no great matter in the general amounts, becomes rather important when we recollect that it is equivalent to the postage, on the plan under consideration, of *four millions of letters*. We have adopted the smaller sum, that we may err, if we do err, on the *sure* side, and also because *some* of the net profit must be attributed to colonial and packet postages—how much we cannot discover—but if we may judge by the extraordinary bargain lately made for the West Indian

Indian and North American packets, that class of profits is not likely to be a very considerable amount.

The annual number of chargeable letters, including penny and twopenny posts, but exclusive of foreign letters, and 'reckoning double and triple letters as single,' on which the gross produce of 2,339,738*l.* arises, is a matter in dispute between Mr. Hill, the post-office authorities, and the Committee:—he first rated it at 88,000,000, but subsequently reduced it to 80,000,000—the second estimated it at 58,000,000, but afterwards raised it to 70,000,000—the Committee adopt 77,500,000. As the second post-office estimate of 70,000,000 was the result of the actual reckoning of three several weeks, we should have chosen it; but as a general rule, we abide by the estimates of the Committee—77,500,000, which gives the present average charge on each letter that passes through the post-office at 6½*d.**

To produce the same gross revenue as at present—2,339,738*l.*, say 2,400,000*l.*—would require, at a penny rate, 576 millions of letters—576 millions!

Now let us consider the probabilities of any such increase, or of anything approaching to it, from a uniform penny rate, as stated by Mr. Hill and the principal witnesses. The first item mentioned by the Committee is the only one of which we can have any certain measure, and it is that also which we receive with the greatest satisfaction—the abolition of parliamentary franks. The franking privilege, though it has been twice limited and curtailed, is still unreasonably large, and is, to nearly half its amount, a kind of legitimated abuse. The privilege ought properly to cease with the session; but by the doctrine that extends personal privileges to forty days before and after prorogation, and by the care that is always taken that the prorogation shall never be for more than forty days, that which was meant for a temporary privilege is converted into a privilege all the year round. In these days of professed reform, we should wonder that this abuse, and the concomitant and greater one which stands on the same ground,

* The Committee make a great parade of accuracy, but we confess that they sometimes seem to us to state their accounts in a very obscure and bungling way: for instance, in computing the number of letters, they say, 'reckoning double and triple letters as single;' which may mean either that they 'reckoned double and triple letters as single,' or that they reduced the double and triple letters into their single value.

out any regard to value) a letter must be a letter, whether charged double or single. Nor do they state on which of two or three views which they take of the gross revenue this calculation is made. But, after all, it is no more than justice to say that the general arrangement of the report—its methodical prolegomena, and its index raisonné, are executed with great industry and a praiseworthy degree of fairness and intelligence. It would be difficult, we think, to treat so complicated a mass of matter with more clearness and fewer mistakes.

exemption from arrest, had not been questioned, but that we know how apt those who are the most severe against any undue advantage to other men are the most tenacious of their own. We confess that this single advantage of Mr. Hill's plan would compensate in our eyes for many imperfections; nay, we anticipate that whatever becomes of Mr. Hill's plan, franking must be still further curtailed in extent, and limited to its proper time, the session of parliament; and we trust that the still more crying abuse of *exemption from arrest* will be similarly limited.

The total number of franks, parliamentary and official, is stated at 7,000,000, of which the parliamentary franks are calculated (p. 57) at 4,800,000. As the exercise of the whole extent of the privilege of peers and members would reach 10,000,000, Colonel Maberly thinks this comparatively small number 'a startling fact against the anticipated increase of correspondence.' We are not of that opinion: for, though franks are sometimes asked for with great indelicacy and impudence, yet, generally speaking, the station and habits of peers and members of parliament prevent ordinary persons from endeavouring to profit by their privilege; and in the next place it is for letters sent that strangers are most apt to use the franks of members—the franks received are, from the nature of things, generally confined to the use of the member himself, or his near connexions; but—as the limit of franks to be sent is only 10, and the limit of franks to be received is 15—of the total privilege—estimated by Colonel Maberly at 10,000,000—the franks that could possibly be sent would be but two-fifths, = 4,000,000: so that it may be possible, nay, it is most probable, that a majority of the members do exhaust their full number of *outgoing* franks—which is a sufficient explanation of that fact that 'startled' Colonel Maberly.

The postage now lost by parliamentary franking may be estimated at about 320,000*l.*, which it is clear that the public at large pays in its general postage: this, with about 50,000*l.*, which the same number of letters is expected to bring into the Exchequer at the one penny rate, will make an eventual difference to the public of 370,000*l.* by the abolition of parliamentary franking.

With regard to official franks, which amount to above 2,000,000, we anticipate little or no saving: there is no doubt some occasional abuse, or rather laxity, in applying these franks to other than strictly official purposes, but not, we are satisfied, to any considerable extent; and if the number of ordinary letters be increased, we presume that official letters will increase at least equally to any saving made by the suppression of abuse; and as these postages are to be merely nominal—passing free through the post-office,
but

but paid for by the other departments, we do not conceive that this head of the public service will have much effect on Mr. Hill's plan either way.

As to the general correspondence of the country, there can be no question that the increase will be very considerable—but nothing at all equal to the visionary expectations of many of the witnesses, or even the more mitigated, yet, still we fear, exorbitant calculations of Mr. Hill.

Mr. Hill, indeed, does not distinctly say what increase he expects; but he gave in his pamphlet a gradation of calculations, which carried it up from *twofold* to *sevenfold* on his own original estimate of the present number at 88,000,000—that is, to above 600 millions; but in *most* of his calculations he seems to content himself with a *fivefold* increase, or about 440,000,000—giving a gross revenue of 1,846,000*l.*; which would leave a net revenue of 1,198,752*l.* :—for which we, and we dare say the new Chancellor of the Exchequer, would be very willing to compound all the loftier promises of the witnesses who talk of *twentyfold* and *fiftyfold*; nay, one is bold enough to promise one hundredfold—but, to be sure, he is—an auctioneer!

In his later evidence before the Committee Mr. Hill varies these calculations in some very remarkable points. First he lowers, as we have already said, his estimate of the present numbers from *eighty-eight* to *eighty* millions; but, what is more important, he raises the rate per letter from *one penny* to *one penny halfpenny*, an addition of fifty per cent., which he justifies, no doubt, by the increased rate on the excepted classes of letters; but if these excepted classes be so numerous as to swell the total by *one-half*, what becomes of all the talk about uniformity, dispatch, simplicity, and so forth? The calculation becomes by one-half less incredible, but the principle of a *single and a uniform penny postage* is gone. But even these prudential variations from the original scheme do not very much mend the matter to our understanding. To produce a net revenue of 1,200,000*l.* would still require a fivefold increase on eighty millions of letters = four hundred millions: 1,540,000*l.* would require a sixfold increase, or four hundred and eighty millions of letters, and so on to sevenfold; and if we are to credit the witnesses, to twentyfold—fiftyfold!

These enormous speculations—*six hundred millions* of letters, *two thousand millions* of letters, *four thousand millions* of letters—advanced seriously and as *statistical evidence* by rational and respectable men, (we say nothing of the auctioneer's *eight thousand millions*,) bewilder the understanding. Our feeble mind has not capacity to follow them; but let us endeavour to comprehend a

more

more moderate application of the principle to the single city of London. In order to maintain the present rate of revenue collected in London, Mr. Smith, superintendent of the Twopenny Post-office, shows that his department must be increased by sixteen millions of letters; and Sir Edward Lees, one of the secretaries of the Post-office, and an officer in whose experience the committee confides, calculates that, in order to equal the present revenue, the General Post must bring in 168,000,000 annually, and, of course, must send out an equal number—in all 336,000,000; adding to which the 16,000,000 of the twopenny post, we have a total for London alone of 352,000,000: so that every single person of the million of souls above mere infancy, which is about the population of London, would have to receive or send 352 letters a year, if Mr. Hill's plan is to make good the present post-office revenue. There would be of course, though Sir Edward Lees does not notice it, some deduction to be made, because foreign letters swell the amount of London postage beyond the inland average:—with every allowance that can be made, the number seems to us incomprehensibly enormous; but the committee make neither objection nor criticism on Sir Edward Lees's calculation, though they examined him two several times upon the point.

Now let us consider the other grounds on which any increase (whatever be the amount) is anticipated.

First, every man's own common sense and experience will satisfy him that the reduction of the tax to a penny must produce a large increase; but we think every one (except mere men of business, whose case we shall have to consider presently) will, on self-reflection, be inclined to doubt whether the increase will, in his own case, be so very considerable. The reluctance of almost every one to write when he can avoid it is proverbial; and indolence, and 'really having nothing to say,' are, we are satisfied, much more effective restrictions on letter-writing than a generous consideration of the tax which your friend will have to pay, or even the more remote terror of the cost of the answer. Does any one believe that it will triple his own private correspondence? Which of ourselves, in common life, who write, let us suppose, seven letters a week, can contemplate without dismay the idea of writing one and twenty? But formidable as that may appear, it is really nothing to the task to which the great magician Rowland dooms us—'slaves of the letter-box!' Let us see our own week's work. One of our letters, being to a lady, must have an envelope, and pay 1s. 10d. as double; four single letters to various distances, at 7d., 8d., 9d., 10d.; one to Liverpool, 11d., and one to a friend at Edinburgh to inquire whether there really is, *in rerum natura*, such a philosopher as Dominie Simpson,

Simpson, 1s. 2d.—sum total *seventy-nine pence*. So that in our own individual instance, to make the scheme succeed, we must write *seventy-nine letters a week*. We humbly beg to be specially excepted from all benefit of the new act. We have not only neither time nor patience to write *seventy-nine letters in a week*, but we have not *seventy-nine possible subjects for such letters*, and we doubt whether we know *seventy-nine different persons on the face of the earth to whom a letter from us would be welcome once a year, much less once every week in the year*. And then the stationers' bills increased *tenfold*. England would become a real *Laputa*, where no man would have any other possible employment than pen and ink. So that the witnesses who so confidently promise that even *domestic correspondence is to increase ten and twelve fold*, are either utterly mistaken, or they would inflict on the country a worse than *Egyptian plague*. We are aware that it will be said that the great increase will be not merely of the letters which a person will write, but of the persons who will write letters; but there seems, as Dominic Simpson would say, 'a fallacy at the bottom of that proposition,' for no more persons can write than know how to write, and of each person who knows how to write how many are there that do not occasionally exercise that faculty? And of those who do now exercise it, how many, we ask again, can be expected to triple their correspondence, nay, even to double it?

Mr. Hill supports his views of the increase by the reduction of the tax by the following examples:—

'The price of soap, for instance, has recently fallen by about one-eighth; the consumption in the same time has increased by one-third. Tea, again, the price of which, since the opening of the China trade, has fallen by about one-sixth, has increased in consumption by almost a half. The consumption of silk goods, which, subsequently to the year 1823, have fallen in price by about one-fifth, has more than doubled. The consumption of coffee, the price of which, subsequently to 1823, has fallen about one-fourth, has more than tripled. And the consumption of cotton goods, the price of which, during the last twenty years, has fallen by nearly one-half, has in the same time been fourfolded.

'If we might safely infer a general rule from these facts, it would appear that, to say the least, the increase in consumption is inversely as the squares of the prices. And a calculation founded on this rule would lead us to expect that, if the proposed average reduction in postage, viz. from 6d. to 1d. per letter, were effected, the number of letters would increase thirty-six fold.'—*Post-office Reform*, p. 85.

But admitting, as we have done all along, that a reduction of tax must produce an increase of consumption, we ask how any sensible man can think that anything like the same rules of increase can apply to articles of personal comfort, gratification,

tion, or luxury, like soap, tea, coffee, or silk, and to a matter in itself troublesome, if not distasteful, like letter-writing. By taking off the duties on gin and brandy, the consumption might be enormously increased; but if all the drugs in the Pharmacopœia were to be duty free, would any one swallow any more physic than he could not help? When the halfpenny stamps were first put upon periodical papers, Dean Swift said, 'Me-thinks the picture is worth the money;' and we have no doubt that at the first burst of the penny covers, wafer-stamps, and all the rest of the novelty, there will be a very considerable increase: but when the correspondence shall have subsided into its natural channel, and be regulated by the wants or wishes of mankind, we doubt—from the view of the subject which our own, perhaps narrow, circle affords—we doubt whether social and domestic correspondence will be more than doubled, and we are satisfied that this class would be nearly, if not altogether, as much increased by a twopenny as by a penny-rate, while the chance of maintaining a revenue would be doubled, and the risk of actual loss altogether avoided.

We do not remember to have seen in the evidence any calculation of the proportion between the *social*, as we may call them, and the *mercantile* letters: the impression seems to be that the former is comparatively small; but we are somewhat surprised, as we have already said, to find M. Piron stating that, in France, they are so insignificant a part of the general correspondence, that he throws them altogether out of his calculation. We are satisfied that this cannot be true to anything like the same degree in England. We believe, on the contrary, that the class of social letters is a very considerable element in our post-office communication, and that, with regard to it, Mr. Hill's anticipations will be signally disappointed.

His great *cheval de bataille*, however, is the mercantile correspondence, and here no reasonable doubt can be entertained that there will be a great and beneficial increase under both the heads into which the subject naturally divides itself;—first, the creating new correspondence; secondly, the bringing into the post-office a large correspondence which now passes through other—some of them illegal—channels.

On the first head, however, we again doubt whether the increase will be any thing like what is expected. Business is business, and even at the present rates of postage is, and must be done, whatever it may cost—the cost eventually falling on the consumer; but it is, as we have already shown, an item hardly perceptible, when mixed up in the immense value of commodities and the vast amounts of mercantile profits. We therefore do not believe that

that postage impedes, or can impede, *business*, so much as one part of the evidence endeavours to prove—for business, like steam, has an expansive power that overcomes all obstacles. That a penny rate should bring into the post-office a vast correspondence which now evades it, is another matter, to which we shall come presently: at this moment we are only considering whether any great spring will be given to business, and this again we venture to doubt. But the great increase promised by the evidence is not so much of *letters* as of what may be strictly called *parcels* and *advertisements*, things now sent in bulk into the country by coaches and carriers, for local distribution, but which, under a penny rate, will be sent direct to individuals. We have already said that this is not the legitimate duty of a post-office, and we think that great inconveniences and abuses will arise from the practice without any sufficient compensatory advantages. Of the witnesses who have spoken specifically of the items that are to contribute to the enormous increase predicted, the great majority contemplate the distribution of printed papers which are essentially advertisements; manufacturers, house-agents, publishers, venders of quack medicines, secretaries to insurance companies, and so forth, all profess that their missives will increase from five to fifty fold. In order to give this important point the fairest consideration, we shall at the risk, or we fear the certainty, of being thought tedious by some readers, examine in detail one of the practical examples produced by the committee of what may be expected; and for this purpose we shall select the evidence of Mr. Charles Knight, as one of the most favourable to the views of the penny-post advocates—himself, we may say, one of the projectors of the scheme—of course a zealous friend to it, but an intelligent and candid witness. He is an extensive publisher of cheap works, and is the publisher of the ‘Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge.’ Mr. Knight’s house receives about ‘7000 letters a-year, of which ‘about 4000 are commercial, and 3000 are literary—meaning (by ‘*literary*’) a supply of matter for the works he publishes; and he ‘sends out about 4000, of which 1000 are commercial and 3000 ‘*literary*: so that in the course of a year he receives and sends ‘annually through the post-office 6000 letters connected with the ‘literary conduct of his business. Of these works the most important, and involving the greatest correspondence, is the *Penny Cyclopædia*. The matter, wholly original, is supplied by from ‘eighty to one hundred authors, of whom 4-5ths live within the ‘twopenny post, and the other fifth in the Universities, Ireland, ‘Scotland, &c. They invariably use the twopenny post for conducting this operation, avoiding the use of the general post, as ‘the

'the transmission of a sheet or two of paper would be too expensive. The parcels are sent to the distant author by coach or other private conveyance, which prevents Mr. Knight sending to these authors *proofs* and *revises* [the printed sheets for the author's corrections] as often as he ought: all these, in case of a reduction of the rates to a penny, or even to twopence, would go by the post. If the reduction takes place, he expects to receive and send annually 7000 commercial letters, and 5000 literary ones.' (3223.)

On the 11,000 letters he receives and sends, Mr. Knight calculates (2234) his present postage at 297*l.* 18*s.*: the postage on the 12,000 letters he expects to send would be 50*l.*; so here would be an increase of 1000 in number, and a loss to the revenue of 247*l.* 18*s.*, or about one-sixth: ~~this~~ upon letters (including authors' *proofs*, &c.) But Mr. Knight adds, that 'if there were a penny rate, he would send *circulars* (that is, circular *advertisements*) to a large amount: for example, he has a list of 1860 respectable country booksellers, with whom he does not now communicate, as they are supplied by the wholesale houses: he would send them monthly circulars, say 20,000. Then he has published the *Pictorial Bible*.* He thinks there would be no difficulty in getting a list of all the clergymen in England, and no great difficulty in obtaining a very complete one of all the dissenting ministers. To all those he would send a circular announcing the completion of the *Pictorial Bible*. That, on a rough calculation, alone would dispose of 20,000 circulars; and seeing that 100,000 circulars might be sent annually for about 400*l.*, he conceives that would be by far the most efficient mode of advertisement. So that, on the whole, he expects to receive and send, under a penny rate, 127,000, instead of 11,000, and, of course, to pay in postage 529*l.* 3*s.* instead of 297*l.* 18*s.*, nearly double.' (3234.) We wish Mr. Knight had also stated, on the other hand, how much of the advertisement duty would be lost.

This profusion of circulars, no doubt, Mr. Knight would send, at least at first; but as every other wholesale, and, perhaps, retail, house, would do the same, is it certain that in the general scramble Mr. Knight would do more profitable business than he now does? Is there not danger that the public should soon become disgusted at being overwhelmed with such masses of circulars, on all sides, from all quarters, and on all subjects? Would not the circulars fall into disrepute? and should we not

* He is also the publisher, and, we understand, the editor of the '*Pictorial Shakespeare*,' a work which does credit not only to his taste in the arts, but to his judgment as a critic, and his talents as a writer.

treat them as we already do those (comparatively few) which are now thrust under our doors or into our hands, that is, throw them unread into the fire or the kennel? And if such should be the result, how long, after the first burst of the novelty, would Mr. Knight think it worth while to spend 500*l.* a-year in forcing his circulars into people's hands? Will not respectable publishers, and traders of all sorts, revert to the old channels of advertisement, the 'Times' and the 'Standard,' the 'Courier' and the 'Herald,' where the very expense is a guarantee that the advertisement shall be worth something; and what, then, will have become of the post-office revenue?

We conclude, therefore, on this head, by repeating our doubts, whether, supposing the scheme to be in any great degree successful, the legitimate, social, and commercial correspondence should be exposed to the risk inevitable from such a deluge of extraneous matter—and whether this extraneous matter is, even on the showing of the projectors themselves, of sufficient value to justify so large an innovation, both on the principle and the practice of a post-office? We have abundant evidence that the parties contrive to do their business pretty successfully through their present channels; and we see no public reason why both the post-office and advertisement duties should be given up, or even risked by an experiment, of which the most immediate and certain profit would go directly into the private pockets of a limited number of wholesale traders, who would not, we are satisfied, and perhaps could not, make any adequate reduction on their prices, and which reductions, even if they should be made, would be too small to be felt by the ultimate purchaser.

We now arrive at the last, and, we believe, the most powerful argument in favour of the plan; one which probably has been, like the others, exaggerated, but which must, even after all deductions, be very important—we mean, the bringing into the post-office an immense quantity of correspondence which now passes through evasive or illegal channels.

Mr. Hill, and some of the witnesses (but the latter very sparingly), indicate some ingenious modes of evasion, which seem to us rather good stories than good arguments, *e. g.* :—

'Some years ago, when it was the practice to write the name of a member of parliament for the purpose of franking a newspaper, a friend of mine, previous to starting on a tour into Scotland, arranged with his family a plan for informing them of his progress and state of health, without putting them to the expense of postage. It was managed thus: He carried with him a number of old newspapers, one of which he put into the post-office daily. The post mark, with the date, showed his progress; and the state of his health was evinced by the selection of the name,

name, from a list previously agreed upon, with which the newspaper was franked. "Sir Francis Burdett," I recollect, denoted vigorous health.' —*P. O. R.*, p. 91.

Now, as Mr. Hill seems to tell this story as from his own knowledge, we must not question the fact; but Mr. Hill's friend must have been a great fool, or the post-office authorities less sharp than we have usually found them. Think of a man, wealthy enough to indulge himself in 'a tour in Scotland,' encumbering himself with such a number of old newspapers as could supply a *daily* communication with his family; think of his making such a tour in such a precarious state of health that a *daily* bulletin should be necessary; for in the supposed case nothing was told but his whereabouts and his health; and think of the agony of his family and friends, if, when the writer had intended to announce *vigorous health*, Sir Francis Burdett had happened — *Teste* the *Morning Post* — to have a fit of the gout, or a fall from his horse. We can imagine the afflicted family posting down to Scotland in all speed at 2s. 6d. a mile, and double fees to the post-boys, naturally expecting to find their friend prostrate under an infiction similar to that with which his *Sosia*, Sir Francis, might have been visited. It would be rather an expensive parsimony, and at best a most clumsy and, for any real purpose, insufficient device: but it seems as if Mr. Hill had forgotten that in those days members' names were not *usable without their permission*; and if the post-office authorities had found him employing one day the name of Sir Francis, and the next that of Mr. Pitt, and the next that of Mr. Fox, and so on, they would have seen that all was not right, and Mr. Hill's friend might have found himself in a scrape, not only by his family's paying postage for the newspaper, but for his breach of privilege. There are other stories of the same kind, and even more absurd; but this instance may suffice. It is certain, however, that there is a great deal of this sort of fraud attempted, and more frequently — what is not fraud, though, if observed, it subjects the paper to postage — the making a mark to point attention to a particular paragraph; but the possibility of the fraudulent use of newspapers would be almost annihilated by a simple remedy suggested by the postmaster of Exeter, and which on other grounds also ought to be adopted: that is, limiting the posting of newspapers to a few days after their publication, and prohibiting their being reposted; for it is with 'stale newspapers alone that these frauds are practised.'

But the three great classes of evasion are, 1. by coach parcels; 2. by carriers; 3. by bags or boxes conveying ship-letters.

These

These are practised, according to the evidence, to a vast extent, and, as well as several minor modes of evasion (not worth specifying), might be cut up, without the aid of Mr. Hill's plan, to a degree that would, we are disposed to think, double the quantity of legitimate correspondence sent through the post-office. The witnesses rate the probable increase much higher; but we think there is evidence that they are over-sanguine as to their idea of the complete extinction of a large class of these frauds by the penny rate—for letters can be sent in parcels at *ten* for a penny, which will still afford, on large quantities, a sufficient profit to tempt evasion. Colonel Maberly says,

'If I wished to send a parcel of letters weighing 16 lbs., containing 1000 letters, the number taken by Mr. Hill in his calculation by coach, I can send them, not for 2s. 6d., as he says, but for 7s. 10d.: 1000 letters put into the post-office, at a postage of 1d. each, would come to nearly the sum of four guineas, so that there would be 1000 letters sent in a parcel weighing 16 lbs. by coach for 7s. 10d., and I find, at the rate of 1d. each to the post-office, they would amount to nearly four guineas.'—(2895.)

As to the conveyance by carriers,—that prevails chiefly in the neighbourhood of the great manufacturing towns, and consists for the most part in what can hardly be called a fraud—the transmission, not of letters, but of little notes between the outlying workmen who happen to live along the high roads travelled by the carriers, and their employers, relative to the works in hand: but here again it is doubted whether the carriers will not do for a *halfpenny* a service which costs them nothing, and at all events, whatever good is to be done in this way might and ought forthwith to be done by the establishment of local penny-posts in all those districts—which the post-office is always ready to do where there is any prospect of repayment, or even of only a moderate loss; and where these posts are not established, we rather suspect it is because the numbers conveyed by the carriers are in fact inconsiderable: but be this as it may, one fact is undeniable, that local penny posts, to which there can be no possible objection, would do all that can be done to suppress this practice, without having recourse to the extreme and unnecessary expedient of a universal penny post. This is a most important consideration, because it is solely with reference to these penny conveyances in the manufacturing districts that the government seems to have adopted a penny as the universal rate, contrary to the report of the Committee itself, which recommended *twopence*. Nothing, say the witnesses on whom the government appears to rely most, can extirpate the penny fraud, but a penny rate: be it so;—then why not try in the first instance the penny remedy

in the districts where the penny fraud exists? We do not see what good answer can be made.

The third and last head of this class is also a very important one, not so much in the number as in the amount of postages lost to the revenue—we mean the letters collected at several counting and coffee houses, and conveyed to private ships, and by them to foreign parts, chiefly to America. This, again, is hardly a fraud; doubts are even entertained to what extent it is illegal; and there is evidence as well as reason to believe that the houses where it is chiefly practised, and which are some of the most respectable in England, would not countenance nor permit it, if they were satisfied of its illegality—let the law then be made clear and notorious and the greater part of this abuse will vanish. The house of Baring, Brothers, and Co., who, as Mr. Bates, their chief acting partner, states, send about 10,000 letters in boxes from London to be shipped in the Liverpool *liners*, would assuredly not continue this practice; and we are equally convinced that the great companies, whose steam-boats will now engross all the traffic in letters, would not lend themselves to a fraud. This matter, therefore, could be, we have no doubt, satisfactorily arranged without the necessity of a uniform inland penny post. We may add also that the number of ship letters is, compared with the general operations of the post-office, exceedingly small, as there seems reason to believe that these do not exceed 200,000 (the post-office witnesses think 120,000), of which about 90,000 pass through the post-office.

We have thus, to the best of our ability, stated the chief points of the case, and the arguments *pro* and *con*, with, as we hope and intend, substantial impartiality. We are conscious that we have omitted a vast number of minor considerations on both sides—and in such a vast and complicated subject, with such volumes of evidence, such masses of documents, and such a variety of witnesses, we cannot flatter ourselves that we may not have made some errors of detail; but we have at least, we hope, opened a more distinct as well as comprehensive view of the leading principles applicable to the case, than are to be found in any of the publications we have seen, which are almost wholly *ex parte* and in favour of the uniform penny rate. This latter circumstance has obliged us to exhibit the considerations on the other side, and may have given to our views an air of hostility to the plan which we really did not originally feel, and which, to the degree it may now exist in our minds, has been produced by the examination of the subject, and by the reasons which we have submitted to our readers. Our first and greatest apprehension is for the revenue; our next is for the safety of the legitimate correspondence

spondence of the country ; and another and very important, though not easily measured one, is the possible political effect to which the post-office may be perverted.

But we cannot conceal our wonder at the conduct of the Ministers—at their long and pertinacious delay to make the most necessary and most indisputably advantageous improvements of the existing system, and then, on the sudden, running into the other extreme, and throwing away, like madmen, the whole revenue of which they before refused to surrender even an imperceptible fraction. Why have they not remedied various small and several more serious grievances, inconveniences, and delays, which have been reported against by their own Commissioners and officers? Why did they not, on the appearance of the first report of the Committee on Mr. Hill's plan, in April, 1838—or even earlier, on the report of Lord Duncannon's Commission—immediately get rid of the two greatest sources of fraud, by settling the question of ship-letters on some moderate scale, and by extending to the manufacturing districts, in which the carriers do so much alleged injury, the recognised and unobjectionable system of local penny posts? Why, above all, did they not take advantage of the proposition to which Mr. Hill was at one time favourable, and which the Government Commission had almost arranged with him (see Report, July, 1837!) of trying the experiment on the threepenny* post circle round London—that great and most important district, almost a kingdom in itself, where the experiment might have been made without any disarrangement of system, any innovation of principle, any alteration of popular habits, or much eventual loss in case of failure? Why did they refuse in July, 1837, the smallest, most reasonable concession, and in August, 1839, surrender the whole, bodily, as if under the influence of a panic?—And, finally, why, even after they had resolved on a small and uniform rate, did they not adhere to a *twopenny* rate, which *they themselves* had persuaded the Committee to recommend, as the lowest that would cover the expense?

In a panic, indeed, they might well have been—the prospect of the harvest, the defalcation of the revenue, and the state of the country, might alarm stouter hearts than theirs;—but their panic took the opposite direction from that which might be expected, and, as will sometimes happen to weak minds utterly bewildered, they

* To which, even, they might soon, if the experiment were successful, have given a new and important extension, by establishing a kind of local post-office at every Station of the various railroads, which would in a manner extend the London penny, or, as it rather should be, the *twopenny* post, along the whole line, and letters and answers be interchanged in a morning between London and Birmingham as now between Piccadilly and Aldgate.

rushed towards the very dangers that disturbed them : unless, indeed—which we on the whole rather believe—they acted under no other motive than an anxiety to propitiate a few radical votes by plunging the country into another perilous innovation, which, be the event what it may, *stands*, at present, on no sufficient grounds either of fact or reasoning. We fear the matter is now gone too far to allow us to indulge a hope that the experiment may yet be limited to the London district, and we have therefore only to wish that the result of this extraordinary affair may not prove a gigantic exemplification of the old proverb—*Penny wise and pound foolish !*

The ministers, indeed, to guard against this result, procured from the House of Commons a resolution that it would, in the event of failure, make good the defalcation of revenue. We put little confidence in such resolutions. The House that passed it will probably not be in existence when the time comes for the redemption of the pledge, and, in any case, we cannot imagine that any other source of revenue will be discovered which shall unite in a higher degree than postage all the recommendations which a tax can have. It is one of the oldest and, till the present agitation was got up, the only popular source of public revenue. Blackstone, in his Commentaries, after having observed on the Customs, Excise, and Salt duties, says, ‘ Another very considerable branch of the revenue is levied with greater cheerfulness, as, instead of being a burden, it is a manifest advantage to the public: I mean the post-office, or duty for the carriage of letters.’ (*Com. b. i. c. 8, § 4.*) And so little did this great constitutional lawyer imagine that it was not to be considered a legitimate source of revenue, or could be liable to such a revolution as now threatens it, that he ranks it under the head of ‘ *Perpetual Taxes.*’ It is, indeed, the lightest and fairest of all public contributions: it is in a great measure optional, and always bears a proportion to the use one makes of it, and the value one receives from it. It is, in fact, a *small, equitable, and nicely-graduated* INCOME TAX, with none of its harsh or inquisitorial circumstances; and we are quite certain that no substitute will ever be found so just in its principle, and so easy and popular in its collection.

We therefore consider as of very little value the pledge of the House of Commons to find out a substitute; but we are in some degree reconciled to the proposed change, or rather, we should say, our alarm is moderated, by a consideration—very obvious we think, but which we do not remember to have seen mentioned in any discussion on the subject—it is, that if the ministers shall take care in their experiment not to disorganise the post-office itself, there will be at hand a palliative at least of the fiscal mischief.

mischief. If the *penny* rate should, on a fair trial, be found to fail, we hope and believe that no House of Commons would object to trying the *twopenny* rate—or even, as a last resort, the *three-penny*—we say as a *last resort*, because threepence is the very extreme at which it would be possible to maintain the principle of *uniformity*—and indeed even to that rate the persons residing at short distances would hardly be brought to submit; but to the *twopenny* rate there could be no serious objection—except that of making *short* distances pay for *long*, which is inseparable from *uniformity*—and it seems certain that it would save the public from any present loss, and it might reasonably be calculated upon as affording—not certainly anything like the present surplus of *sixteen hundred thousand pounds*, but one which might tend (in comparison with our present prospects) to give some degree of consolation, if not confidence, to those whose greatest objections to the plan arise from its probable effect—particularly at such a critical and inauspicious moment—on that vast and vital class of interests which are involved in the comprehensive words—PUBLIC CREDIT.

Here we should have concluded, but there has occurred, while we are writing, an incident that crowns in the most appropriate manner all the preceding conduct of our Ministers, and forces itself on our notice: amidst all these serious errors and deplorable blunders, it was necessary to their consistency that they should make themselves—even in this domestic matter—contemptible and ridiculous in the face of Europe; and they have done it. After the collective wisdom of the Cabinet had adopted, and after they had induced the imperial legislature to sanction, the scheme of Mr. Rowland Hill, they bethought themselves that it might be expedient to provide some practical means of carrying it into effect; and accordingly the Lords Commissioners of her Majesty's Treasury assembled at a solemn board on the 23rd of August, 1839, issued a verbose and pompous proclamation, inviting '*artists, men of science, and the public in general*,' to devise the best means for bringing—its main feature—the pre-paying stamp into use; and, not satisfied with thus inviting 'the artists and men of science and public in general' of the British dominions to co-operate on this important, though rather tardy investigation, they solicit the good offices of all mankind, and desire Lord Viscount Palmerston to spread, wherever the voice of the Foreign-office can be heard, the glad tidings that the British Nation will give two prizes for the best and second-best solution of this interesting problem—the first prize of no less a sum than 200*l.*, and the second of 100*l.* sterling money! Truly, whatever

the world may think of our wisdom in this affair, they at least cannot but admire our national taste, dignity, and munificence !*

* 'Treasury Minute, dated 23rd August, 1839:—

'My Lords read the Act for the further regulation of the Duties of Postage, which received the royal assent on Saturday the 17th instant.

'By this Act my Lords are invested with a power of carrying into effect the reduced and uniform rate of postage contemplated by Parliament, either according to the present mode of collecting the postage, or by pre-payment, collected by means of stamps, compulsory or optional.

'Before my Lords can decide upon the adoption of any course, either by stamp or otherwise, they feel it will be *useful* that artists, men of science, and the public in general, may have an opportunity of offering any suggestions or proposals as to the manner in which the stamp may best be brought into use. With this view, my Lords will be prepared to receive and consider any proposal which may be sent in to them on or before the 15th day of October, 1839.

'All persons desirous of communicating with my Lords on the subject are requested to direct to the Lords of the Treasury, Whitehall, marked "Post-office Stamp."

'My Lords will be prepared to award a premium of 200*l.* on such proposal as they may consider the most deserving of attention, and 100*l.* to the next best proposal.

'My Lords will be prepared to receive and consider proposals from foreign countries; and they desire that a copy of this Minute be transmitted to Lord Palmerston, and that his Lordship should be requested to take such measures as he may deem most advisable, through Her Majesty's Ministers abroad, for the purpose of making known the intentions of this Board, &c. &c. &c.

